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WINTER EVENING TALES

COLLECTED AMONG

THE COTTAGERS

IN THE

South of Scotland.

By JAMES HOGG,

AUTHOR OF "THE QUEEN'S WAKE," &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

" In rangles round afore the ingle's lowe,
Frae Gudame's mouth auld-world Tales they hear,
O' Warlocks loupin' round the Wirrikow,
O' Ghaists that won in glen and kirk-yard drear,
Whilk touzles a' their tap, an' gars them shake wi' fear."—*Fergusson*.

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WINTER EVENING TALES.

THE BRIDAL OF POLMOOD.

CHAP. I.

LAST autumn, on my return from the Lakes of Cumberland to Edinburgh, I fell in with an old gentleman at the village of Moffat, whose manners and conversation deeply interested me. He was cheerful, unaffected, and loquacious, to a degree which I have not often witnessed; but his loquacity was divested of egotism—his good humour communicated itself to all present, and his narratives were fraught with traditional knowledge, the information to which, of all others, my heart is most fondly attached. Having learned, in the course of our conversation, that he was bound for Edinburgh, and that he had already been twice disappointed of obtaining a passage by the Dumfries mail, my friend offered to accommodate him with a seat in our carriage; telling him that we had a spare one, and that instead of incommoding us, he would oblige us by his company. He accepted of our proposal, not only with apparent satisfaction, but with an easy and cheerful grace which seemed peculiar to himself; and early next morning we proceeded on our journey.

As we ascended the lofty green mountains which overlook the vale of Annandale, the sun arose, and the scene became inconceivably beautiful and variegated. The dazzling brightness of the distant Solway it was almost impossible to look upon—the high mountains of Queensberry and Lowther, on the west, were all one sheet of burning gold; while the still higher

ones to the eastward were wrapt in a solemn shade. In almost any other circumstances I could have contemplated the scene with the highest sensations of delight, and gazed upon it without satiety and without weariness. The shades of the mountains were still lessening as the sun advanced, and those shadows, along the whole of their fantastical outline, seemed to be fringed with a delicate rainbow. This phenomena I pointed out to our traveller, who said it was common, and occasioned by the first slanting rays of the sun being reflected from the morning dew. On looking more narrowly to the surface of the mountains, I perceived that it was sprinkled with a garnish of silver globules, brighter and more transparent than the purest gem; yet so tiny, that the weight of a thousand scarcely caused the smallest blade of grass to stoop, or bent the web of the gossamer.

The conversation of our new acquaintance, however, almost superseded the possibility of attending to any thing else. Every farm-steading in the valley, every mountain and glen in our way, was either the scene of some ancient exploit, or some way connected with it. His store of anecdotes was inexhaustible—Our time past lightly away—The scenery of the Solway vanished behind us like the setting moon, and ere we were well aware, found that we had crossed the heights of Erickstane, and were descending by the side of the Tweed, which is there an inconsiderable and trifling rivulet working its way among black mountains.

We breakfasted at a good inn by the side of the river; and, on proceeding a little farther, I observed on the opposite bank, an old decayed house standing in a small wood of stately trees, and asked my intelligent companion how it was named? and to whom it belonged? both in a breath. "That is Polmood," said he; "you must often have heard of Polmood." I had never heard of it. "You *must* have heard of it," rejoined he, "though it may have escaped your memory: people do not

always retain those things in their minds in which they are not interested ; but the antiquity and singularity, of the charter by which that estate is held, has become famous throughout the kingdom. It was granted by King Malcom Canmore, to the first Norman Hunter of Polmood, with all above it to heaven, and below it to hell ; on condition that he and his heirs should present to the king a bow and a broad arrow whenever he came to hunt on that quarter. This charter has been printed in many histories and collections. But besides that, there have so many remarkable occurrences taken place in that family, that it's concerns have never ceased to be a subject of discussion and animadversion, for the space of several ages. I asked of what nature they were ? They are so manifold and so complex, said he, that I could not relate them all in a week ; and if I could they would not attach credit ; for, though well authenticated, they are scarcely sanctioned by the stamp of probability. The answer which I must return to your second query, is a striking instance of this. You ask me who is the owner of Polmood ? That it seems is a hard question, since all the lawyers and judges in Scotland, have not been able to determine it in the course of half a century. It is a positive and lamentable truth, my dear Sir, (I use his own words,) that though it is as apparent to whom the estate of Polmood rightfully belongs, as it is to whom this hand belongs, it has been a subject of litigation, and depending in our Court of Session for these fifty years.

This is one remarkable circumstance connected with the place, which has rendered it famous of late years ; and seems in part to justify an ancient prediction, that the Hunters of Polmood were never more to prosper. This threatening prediction is said to have been delivered at first in a supernatural, or at least an unaccountable manner ; and as it is connected with one of the most extraordinary stories that is to be found in the inexhaustible mine of Scottish tradition, for

lack of better entertainment, I shall, with your permission, relate to you the leading circumstances of the transaction. As my companion and I both gladly accepted of his proposal, he instantly began the following tale, which, with few interruptions, served us for a topic of conversation during the rest of our journey.

As soon as I reached Edinburgh I wrote it down; and waiting upon the narrator, who is now one of my most intimate friends, I read it over to him, correcting and enlarging it, according to his directions. The general observations and reflections which occur, were all made by himself in course of the narration, and I regret my inability to deliver them in his short and impressive manner. He however testified his hearty approbation of them all, declaring that the ideas were *better brought out* than they would have been by himself. I have retained all his sentiments, and even his expressions, to a degree which the present taste for abstract composition will scarcely justify; and only regret the passive obedience exacted by modern critics to punctilious modes of expression, a conformity to which has obliged me to change others which I was inclined to preserve.



CHAP. II.

NORMAN HUNTER of Polmood, the ninth of that name, and chief forester to the king of Scotland in all those parts, was a gentleman of high courage and benevolence, much respected by his majesty, and all the nobles of the court who frequented the forests of Frood and Meggat-dale for the purpose of hunting. He had repeatedly entertained the king himself at his little castle of Polmood; and during the harvest months,

THE BRIDAL OF POLMOOD.

while the king remained at his hunting seat of Crawmel, Norman of Polmood was never absent from his side ; for besides his other qualifications, he was the best marksman then in Scotland ; and so well could his eye have measured distances, that when the deer was running at full speed, and the arrows of all the courtiers flying like meteors, some this way, and some that, whenever Polmood's arrow reached its destination, she was seen to founder.

While the king and his nobles were enjoying the chase on Meggat-dale and the mountains of the Lowes, the queen, with her attendants, remained at the castle of Nidpath, where his Majesty went to visit her once a week ; but when the weather was fine, and the mountains of the forest clear, the queen and her maidens frequently made excursions to the hunting quarters, and spent a few days in diversions with the king and his nobles.

It was during one of those excursions, that the laird of Polmood fell desperately in love with one of the queen's maidens, a very young lady, and supposed to have been the greatest beauty of her time. Her name was Elizabeth Manners ; she was of English extraction ; having followed the queen of Scots from her native home when only a little girl. Many of the young courtiers admired the glow of her opening charms, which were every day ripening into new beauties ; and some of them were beginning to tease and flatter her ; but she being an orphan from a strange country, destitute of titles or inheritance, and dependent on the bounty of the queen, by whom she was greatly beloved, none of them had the generosity to ask her in marriage. The principal of these her admirers were the young Baron Carmichael ; and the duke of Rothsay, brother to the king. They were both goodly knights. Carmichael admired and loved her with all his heart ; but diffidence, or want of opportunity, had prevented him from making his sentiments known to her, otherwise

than by his looks, which he had always flattered himself were returned in a way that bespoke congeniality of feeling. As for Rothsay, he had no other design than that of gaining her for his mistress, a scheme on which his heart had for some time been ardently intent. But no sooner had Norman of Polmood seen her, than he fell violently in love with her, and shortly after asked her of the king and queen in marriage. Polmood being at that time a man of no small consequence, both with regard to possessions and respectability, the royal pair, judging this to be a good offer, and an advantageous settlement for their beauteous ward, approved readily of the match, provided that he gained the young lady's consent. The enamoured forester, having so successfully *started his game*, lost no time in *the chase*; and by the most determined perseverance, to use his own expression, *he run her down* in the course of one week. He opened his proposals in presence of the king and queen, and encouraged by their approbation, pressed his suit so effectually, that the young Elizabeth, not being able to offer any plausible reason why she could not consent, and weening that it would be bad manners to give a disinterested lover an absolute refusal, heard him at first in thoughtful silence, and in a few days finally acquiesced, though Polmood was considerably past the bloom of youth.

Every young lady is taught to look forward to marriage as the great and ultimate end of her life. It is that to which she looks forward for happiness, and in which she hopes to rival or excel her associates; and even *the first* to be married in a family, or court, is a matter of no small consideration. These circumstances plead eloquently in favour of the first lover who makes the dear proposal. The female heart is naturally kind and generous—it feels its own weakness, and its inability to encounter singly the snares and troubles of life; and in short, that it must lean upon another, in order to enjoy the delights most congenial to its natural feelings, and the emana-

tion of those tender affections, in the exercise of which, the enjoyments of the female mind chiefly consist. It is thus that the hearts of many young women become by degrees irrevocably fixed on those, whom they were formerly wont to regard with the utmost indifference, if not with contempt; merely from a latent principle of generosity existing in the original frame of their nature; a principle which is absolutely necessary towards the proper balancing of our respective rights and pleasures, as well as the regulation of the conduct of either sex to the other.

It will readily be conjectured, that it was the power of this principle over the heart of young Elizabeth, that caused her to accept with such apparent condescension, the proposal of marriage made to her by the laird of Polmood; and this, without doubt, influenced her conduct in part; but it was only to her mind like the rosy streaks of the morning, that vanish before a brighter day. From the second day after the subject was first proposed to her, Polmood was of all things the least in her mind. She thought of nothing but the gayety and splendour of her approaching nuptials, and the deference and respect that would be paid by all ranks to the lovely bride, and of the mighty conquest that she was about to have over all her titled court associates, every one of whom she was told by the queen would have been blithe to have been the wife of Polmood. Elizabeth had been brought up an eye witness to the splendour of a court, and learned to emulate, with passionate fondness, every personal qualification, and every ornament of dress, which she had there so often seen admired or envied. Her heart was as yet a stranger to the tender passion. If she felt an impatience for any thing, she knew not what it was, but believed it to be the attainment of finery and state; having never previously set her heart upon any thing else, she believed the void which she began to feel in her heart, was in consequence of such privations. Of

course her bridal ornaments—the brilliant appearance she would make in them—the distinguished part that she was to act in the approaching festivity—her incontestable right of taking place of all those court ladies, to whom she had so long stooped, and even of the queen herself—the honour of leading the dance in the hall and on the green; as well as the procession to the chapel of St Mary of the Lowes, and the more distant one to the shrine of St Bothans. These gay phantoms wrought so powerfully upon the mind of the fair Elizabeth, that it eagerly set aside all intervening obstacles which placed themselves in array before the wedding, and the track beyond it vanished from her mind's eye, or only attracted it occasionally by a transient meteor ray, which, like the rainbow, retired when she approached it, refusing a nearer inspection.

Polmood became every day more and more enamoured of his betrothed bride; and indeed, though she was little more than arrived at woman's estate, it was impossible to converse with her without considering her as a model of all that was lovely and desirable in woman. She played upon the lute, and sung so exquisitely, that she ravished the hearts of those that heard her; and it is even reported, that she could charm the wild beasts and birds of the forest, to gather around her at even-tide. Her air and countenance were full of grace, and her form was the most elegant symmetry. Her colour outvied the lily and the damask rose—and the amcl of her eye, when she smiled, it was impossible to look stedfastly on.

Instead of any interchange of fond endearments, or any inquiries about the mode of life they were in future to lead, in all their short conversations, she only teased Polmood about such and such articles of dress and necessary equipage; and with proposals for plans of festivity and pleasure of such a nature, as had never before entered our forester's head. He however yielded to every thing with cheerful complacency,

telling her, that as she had been bred at court, and understood all those matters ; and as the king and court were to be their guests on that occasion, every thing should be provided and executed according to her directions. He would then kiss her hand in the most warm and affectionate manner, while she would in return take her leave with a courtsey, and smile so bewitching, that Polmood's heart was literally melted with feelings of soft delight, and he congratulated himself as the happiest of men. At one time, in the height of his ardour, he attempted to kiss her lips, but was astonished at seeing her shrink involuntarily from his embrace, as if he had been a beast of prey ; but as she instantly recovered her gayety, this was no more thought of, and every thing went on as usual.

CHAP. III.

WHEN the news came to the courtiers' ears, that Elizabeth was instantly to be given away by the king, into the arms of Polmood, they were all a little startled. For even those who had never designed to take any particular notice of her, could not bear the thoughts of seeing such a flower cropped by the hand of a country baron, and removed from their circle for ever. Even the lords who had spouses of their own were heard to say, " that they wished her well, and should rejoice at seeing her married, if it turned out conducive to her happiness ; but that indeed they should have been glad of her company for a few years longer, for upon the whole, Polmood could not have taken one from them who would be as much missed." These remarks drew the most sharp retorts from their ladies. They wondered what some people saw about some people—there were some people in the world

who were good for nothing but making a flash, and there were others so silly as to admire those people—happy at getting quit of so formidable a rival, the news of her approaching marriage were welcome news to them—they tossed up their heads, and said, “it was the luckiest occurrence that could have happened to her, there was no time to lose.—If Polmood had not taken her from the court in that manner, possibly no other would, and she would in all probability soon have left it in some other way—there were some who knew, and some who did not know about those things.”

Alexander, duke of Rothsay, was not at that time along with the court, though he arrived shortly after, else it is conjectured that his violent and enterprising spirit would never have suffered the match to go on. Having had abundance of opportunities, he had frequently flattered and teased Elizabeth, and from her condescending, and, as he judged, easy disposition, he entertained no doubts of gaining his dishonourable purpose. Young Carmichael was with the king; and when he was told, that in a few days his dear Elizabeth was to be given in marriage to his kinsman Polmood, together with the lands of Fingland, Glenbreck, and Kingledoors, as her dowry, it is impossible to describe his sensations. He was pierced to the heart, and actually lost for a time all sense of feeling, and power of motion. On recovering a little, he betook himself to the thickest part of the wood, in order to ponder on the best means of preventing this marriage. Elizabeth had before appeared to his eyes a gem of the first water; but when he heard of the sovereign's favour, and of the jointure lands, which lay contiguous to his own, he then saw too late the value of the jewel he was about to lose. He resolved and re-resolved—formed a thousand desperate schemes, and abandoned them again, as soon as suggested for others more absurd. From this turmoil of passion and contrivance, he hasted to seek Elizabeth; she was constantly surrounded by the queen

and the court ladies ; and besides, Polmood was never from her side ; therefore, though Carmichael watched every moment, he could not once find an opportunity of imparting his sentiments to her in private, until the very day previous to that which was fixed for the marriage ceremony. About noon that day, he observed her steal privately into the linn, to wash her hands and feet in the brook—sure such hands and such feet were never before, nor since that time, bathed in the Cramel burn !—Thither Carmichael followed her, trembling with perturbation ; and, after begging pardon for his rude intrusion, with the tear rolling in his eye, he declared his passion in the most ardent and moving terms, and concluded by assuring her, that without her it was impossible for him to enjoy any more comfort in this world. The volatile and unconscionable Elizabeth, judging this to be matter of fact, and a very hard case, after eyeing him from head to foot, observed carelessly, that if he got the king's consent, and would marry her to-morrow, she had no objections. Or, if he chose to carry her off privately that night, she hinted, that she was willing to accompany him. “ Either of those modes, my dear Elizabeth,” said he, “ is utterly impossible. The king cannot and will not revoke his agreement with Polmood ; and were it possible to carry you away privately to-night, which it is not ; to do so in open defiance of my sovereign, would infallibly procure me the distinguished honour of losing my head in a few days ; but you have every thing in your power. Cannot you on some pretence or other delay the wedding ? and I promise to make you my own wife, and lady of my extensive domains, as soon as circumstances will permit.” Elizabeth turned up her blue eyes, and fixed them on the summit of the dark Clokmore, in a kind of uneasy reverie ; she did not like that *permission of circumstances*—the term was rather indefinite, and sounded like something at a distance. Upon the whole, the construction of the sentence was a most unfortunate one for Carmi-

chael. The wedding had taken such absolute possession of Elizabeth's mind, that she thought of nothing else. The ardent manner and manly beauty of Carmichael had for a moment struggled for a participation in the movements of her heart, which even in its then fluctuating state, never lost its hold of the favourite object. But the mentioning of *the wedding* brought all the cherished train of delightful images with it at once; and, at the mentioning of it along with that hated word *delay*—a verb which, of our whole vocabulary, is the most repugnant to every sense and feeling of woman. The wedding could not be delayed!—All was in readiness, and such an opportunity of attracting notice and admiration might never again occur; it was a most repulsive idea; the wedding could not be delayed! such were the fancies that glanced on Elizabeth's mind during the time that she sat with her feet in the stream, and her lovely eyes fixed on the verge of the mountain. Then turning them softly on Carmichael, who waited her decision in breathless impatience, she drew her feet from the brook, and retiring abruptly, said with considerable emphasis, “I wish you had either spoken of this sooner, or not at all.”

Carmichael was left standing by himself in the linn like a statue; regret preying on his heart, and that heart the abode of distraction and suspense. The voice of mirth, and the bustle of preparation, soon extinguished in the mind of Elizabeth, any anxiety which her late conversation had excited there; but the case was widely different with regard to Carmichael. The lady's visible indifference for Polmood, in preference to any other man, while it somewhat astonished him, left him assured that her affections were yet unengaged; and the possession of her maiden heart appeared now to him an attainment of such inestimable value, that all other earthly things faded from the comparison. The equivocal answer with which she had left him, puzzled him most of all; he could gather nothing

from it unfavourable to himself, but to his hopes every thing, as she went away seemingly determined to follow the path chalked out to her by her royal guardians. He stalked up the glen, at every two or three steps repeating these words, "I wish you had mentioned this sooner, or not at all." He could decide upon nothing, for his ideas were all in confusion; and the business was of so delicate a nature that he durst not break it to any of the courtiers; the resolutions which he framed were of a hasty and desperate nature; but what will not love urge a man to encounter.

On his return to the castle, he found the word had been given, to spend the remainder of the day in such sports as in that country they were able to practise, by way of celebrating the bridal eve. They first had a round of tilting at the ring, from which king James himself came off victorious, owing, as was said, to the goodness of his charger. Polmood's horse was very untractable, and when it came his turn to engage with Carmichael, the latter unhorsed him in a very rough and ungracious manner. Polmood said he was nothing hurt; but when he arose, the ladies being all on-lookers, his cheek was burning with vexation and anger. There were no plaudits of approbation from the ring, as Carmichael expected there would be, for all the company weened that he had acted rather unhandsonely. He, however, won the race fairly, though there were nine lords and knights started for the prize, and held him at very hard play. Mar, in particular, kept so stoutly by his side, that in the end he lost only by one step. When Carmichael received the prize from the fair hand of Elizabeth, he kissed it, pressed it hard, and, with a speaking eye, pointed to a pass among the mountains of the forest, pronouncing at the same time in a low whisper, the words, "to-night." Elizabeth courtseyed smiling, but in so easy and careless a manner, that he doubted much if she comprehended his meaning.

The sports went on. A number were by this time stripped

in order to throw the mall. Each candidate was to have three throws. When the rounds were nearly exhausted, his Majesty continued foremost by a foot only ; but Carmichael, by his last throw, broke ground a few inches before his mark. It was then proclaimed, that, if there were no more competitors, Carmichael had gained the prize.

Polmood had declined engaging in the race, though strongly urged to it. He had taken some umbrage at the manner in which Carmichael had used him in the tournament. He likewise refused to enter the lists on this occasion ; but when he saw the king beat by Carmichael, and that the latter was about to be proclaimed victor a second time, his blood warmed—he laid hold of the mall—retired in haste to the footing-post, and threw it with such violence that he missed his aim. The mall took a direction exactly on a right angle from the line he intended ; flew over the heads of one half of the spectators, and plunged into the river, after having soared to an immense height. The incensed forester, having at the same time, by reason of his exertion, fallen headlong on the ground, the laughing and shouting were so loud that the hills rang again, while some called out to measure the altitude, for that the bridegroom had won. He soon recovered the mall ; came again to the footing-post ; threw off his blue bonnet ; and, with a face redder than crimson, flung it a second time with such inconceivable force, that, to the astonishment of all the beholders, it went about one third further than any of the rest had cast it. Polmood was then proclaimed the victor with loud and reiterated shouts. His heart was a prey to every passion in its fiercest extreme. If he was affronted before, he was no less overwhelmed with pleasure when presented with the prize of honour by his adorable Elizabeth.

But here a ridiculous circumstance occurred, which however it is necessary to relate, as it is in some measure connected with the following events.

The gray stone on which queen Margaret and the beautiful Elizabeth sat, during the celebration of those games, is still to be seen at the bottom of the hill, a small distance to the eastward of the old castle of Crawmel. The rest of the ladies, and such of the nobles as did not choose engaging in those violent exercises, are said to have leaned on a bank below ; but the situation which the queen and the bride held, fairly overlooked the field where the sports were. For lack of a better seat, on this stone was placed a small pannel or sack filled with straw. Now it so happened, that the prize for the victor in this exercise, was a love knot of scarlet ribbon, and two beautiful plumes, which branched out like the horns of a deer. When Polmood went up to receive the prize from the hands of his betrothed and adored bride, she, in a most becoming manner, took his blue bonnet from his hand, and fixing the knot and the plumes upon it, in a most showy and tasteful mode, placed it upon his head. Polmood, in the most courtly style he was master of, then kissed her hand, bowed to the queen, and placed Elizabeth by her side on the seat of straw. But when he faced about, the appearance which he made struck every one so forcibly, that the whole company, both men and women, burst out into a roar of laughter ; and Carmichael, in whose heart a latent grudge was still gaining ground, valuing himself upon his wit, cried out, " It is rather a singular coincidence, Polmood, that you should place Elizabeth upon the straw, and she a pair of horns on your head at the same instant." The laugh was redoubled—Polmood's cheek burnt to the bone. He could not for shame tear off the ornaments which his darling had so lovingly and so recently placed in his bonnet, but he turned them to one side, at which the laugh was renewed. He was any thing but pleased at Carmichael.

CHAP. IV.

THE next trial of skill was that of shooting at a mark ; but in this the competition was of no avail. Polmood struck the circle in the middle of the board each time with so much exactness, that they were all utterly astonished at his dexterity, and unanimously yielded him the prize. It was a silver arrow, which he also received from the hands of Elizabeth. Carmichael, having been successful in his former philippic, took occasion to break some other jests on that occasion, too coarse to be here repeated, although they were not in those days considered as any breach of good manners.

Sixteen then stripped themselves to try their skill in wrestling, and it having been enacted as a law, that he who won in any one contest, was obliged to begin the next, Polmood was of course one of the number. They all engaged at once, by two and two, and eight of them having been consequently overthrown, the other eight next engaged by two and two, and four of these being cast, two couples only remained.

Some of the nobles engaged were so expert at the exercise, and opposed to others so equal in strength and agility, that the contests were exceedingly equal and amusing. Some of them could not be cast until completely out of breath. It had always been observed, however, that Polmood and Carmichael threw their opponents with so much ease, that it appeared doubtful whether these opponents were serious in their exertions, or only making a sham wrestle ; but when it turned out that they two stood the last, all were convinced that they were superior to the rest either in strength or skill. This was the last prize on the field, and on the last throw for that prize the victory of the day depended, which each

of the two champions was alike vehemently bent to reave from the grasp of the other. They eyed each other with looks askance, and with visible tokens of jealousy ; rested for a minute or two, wiped their brows, and then closed. Carmichael was extremely hard to please of his hold, and caused his antagonist to lose his grip three or four times, and change his position. Polmood was however highly complaisant, although it appeared to every one beside, that Carmichael meant to take him at a disadvantage. At length they fell quiet ; set their joints steadily, and began to move in a circular direction, watching each other's motions with great care. Carmichael ventured the first trip, and struck Polmood on the left heel with considerable dexterity. It never moved him ; but in returning it, he forced in Carmichael's back with such a squeeze, that the by-standers affirmed they heard his ribs crash ; whipped him lightly up in his arms, and threw him upon the ground with great violence, but seemingly with as much ease as if he had been a boy. The ladies screamed, and even the rest of the nobles doubted if the knight would rise again. He however jumped lightly up, and pretended to smile ; but the words he uttered were scarcely articulate ; his feelings at that moment may be better conceived than expressed. A squire who waited the king's commands then proclaimed Norman Hunter of Polmood the victor of the day, and consequently entitled, in all sporting parties, to take his place next to the king, until by other competitors deprived of that prerogative. This distinction pleased Elizabeth more than any thing she had yet seen or heard about her intended husband, and she began to regard him as a superior character, and one whom others were likely to value. The ruling passions of her heart seem to have been hitherto levelled only at the attainment of admiration and distinction, an early foible of the sex, but though a foible, one that leads oftener to good than evil. For when a young female is placed in a circle of

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acquaintances who know how to estimate the qualities of the heart, the graces of a modest deportment and endearing address, how then does this ardent and amiable desire of rendering herself agreeable stimulate to exertions in the way of goodness ! But, on the contrary, when she is reared in a circle, where splendour is regarded as the badge of superiority, and title as the compendium of distinction, it is then, as in the case of the beauteous Elizabeth, that this inherent principle “ leads to bewilder and dazzles to blind.” The flowers of the forest and garden are not more indicative of the different soils that produce them, than the mind of a young woman is of the company she keeps. It takes its impressions as easily and as true as the wax does from the seal, if these impressions are made while it is heated by the fire of youth ; but when that fire cools, the impressions remain, and good or bad remain indelible for ever. With how much caution these impressions ought at first to be made, let parents then consider, when on them depends, not only the happiness or misery of the individual in this life, but in that which is to come ; and when thousands of the same stock may be affected by them from generation to generation.

When Polmood went up and received the final prize from the hand of Elizabeth, she delivered ~~it~~ with a smile so gracious and so bewitching, that his heart was almost quite overcome with delight ; some even affirmed that they saw the tears of joy trickling from his eyes. Indeed his love was, from the beginning, rather like a frenzy of the mind than a passion founded on esteem, and the queen always remarked, that he loved too well to enjoy true conjugal felicity.

When Carmichael perceived this flood of tenderness and endearment, his bosom was ready to burst, and he tried once more to turn the laugh against Polmood by cutting jests. The prize was a belt with seven silver buckles ; and when he received it from Elizabeth, Carmichael cried out, that it was

of sufficient length to go about them both ; and that Polmood could not do better than make the experiment ; and when he once had her buckled fairly in, he would be wise to keep the hold he had, else they would not be one flesh. It would keep her constantly in his view he said, and it would likewise be a good mark when either of them began to increase in magnitude. There was no one laughed at the jest but himself.

The sports of the evening were closed with a dance on the green, in which the king and queen, and all the nobles joined. The king's old harper was then placed on the gray stone and the sack of straw, and acquitted himself that evening so well, that his strains inspired a hilarity quite unusual. It being so long since such a scene was seen in Scotland, scarcely will it now be believed, that a king and queen, with the lords and ladies of a court, ever danced on the green in the wild remote forest of Meggat-dale ; yet the fact is well ascertained, if tradition can be in aught believed. Nay, the sprightly tunes which the king so repeatedly called for that night, *O'er the boggy*, and *Cutty's wedding*, remain, on that account, favourites to this day in that country. Crawmel was then the most favourite hunting retreat of the Scottish court, on account of the excellent sport that its neighbourhood, both in hunting and angling, afforded ; and it continued to be the annual retreat of royalty, until the days of the beautiful and unfortunate queen Mary, who was the last sovereign that visited the forest of Meggat, so long famed for the numbers and fleetness of its deer.

James and Elizabeth led the ring and the double octave that evening ; and so well did she acquit herself, that all who beheld her were delighted. Polmood made but an indifferent figure in the dance. The field on which he appeared to advantage was overpast, that of Elizabeth's excellence was only commencing. She was dressed in a plain white rail ; her

pale ringlets were curled and arranged with great care, yet so, that all appeared perfectly natural. Her movements were so graceful, and so easy, that they appeared rather like the motions of a fairy or some celestial being, than those of a mortal composed of flesh and blood. The eyes of the nobles had certainly been dazzled while they looked at her, for they affirmed that they could not convince themselves that the grass bent beneath her toe. The next to her among the court ladies, both in beauty and accomplishments, was one Lady Ann Gray, a great favourite with the king, and of whom it was supposed the queen had good reason to have been jealous ; but she being a lady of an easy and unassuming character, never showed any symptoms of suspicion. During the dance, however, it was apparent that the king's eyes were oftener fixed upon her than either his partner or his queen. They continued their frolics on the green till after the setting of the sun, and then, retiring into the pavilion before the castle, they seated themselves promiscuously in a circle, and drank large bumpers to the health of Polmood and Elizabeth, and to other appropriate toasts given by the king—the ladies sung—the lords commended them—and all became one flow of music, mirth, and social glee.

Carmichael alone appeared at times absent and thoughtful, which by the king, and all the rest, was attributed to the defeats he received in the sports of the day ; but his intents towards his kinsman Polmood were evil and dangerous, and there was nothing he desired more than an occasion to challenge him, but no such occasion offering, as the mirth and noise still continued to increase, he slipped away to his chamber in the castle without being missed. He lay down on his bed, dressed as he was, and gave himself up to the most poignant and tormenting reflections. The manner in which he had been baffled by Polmood in the sports, hung about his heart, gnawing it in the most tender part, and much he fear-

ed that circumstance had lessened him in the eyes of the young Elizabeth, and exalted his more fortunate rival. Polmood had not only baffled and dishonoured him in presence of all the court, but was moreover on the very eve of depriving him of one he believed more dear to him than life—it was too much to be patiently born. In short, love, envy, revenge, and every passion of the soul were up in arms, exciting him to counteract and baffle his rival, with regard to the possession of Elizabeth. The night was short, it was the last on which she was free, or could with any degree of honour be taken possession of; that opportunity once lost, and she was lost to him for ever. The result of all those reflections was, a resolution to risk every thing, and rather to die than suffer himself to be deprived of her without an effort.

CHAP. V.

THE castle of Crammel, besides being on a considerable large scale, was fitted up in such a manner as to accommodate a great number of lodgers. In the uppermost story above were twelve little chambers, all distinct from one another; and in each of these a bed laid with rushes, and above these, by way of mattress, a bag filled with a kind of light feathery bent, which they gathered on the hills in abundance, and which made a bed as soft as one of down. When the queen and her attendants visited the hunting quarters, that floor was given wholly up by the gentlemen, who then slept in the pavilion; and each lady had a little chamber to herself, but no curtains to their beds, nor any covering, save one pair of sheets and a rug. The rushes were placed on the floor between a neat seat and the wall, and this was all the furniture that each of these little chambers contained, the beds being only intended for the accommodation of single individuals. The king's chamber was

on the second floor. In it there was a good bed, well fitted up, and on the same flat were five other little chambers, in one of which lay Carmichael, with his bosom in a ferment.

Shortly after his retreat from the pavilion, the queen and ladies, judging, from the noise which the wine had excited, that it was proper for them to retire, bade the jolly party good-night. The king, the lord chamberlain, and a few others, having conveyed them to the bottom of the stair-case, they compelled them to return to the rest of the company in the tent, which they knew they would gladly comply with, and proceeded in a body to their attic story.

In the meantime, Carmichael, hearing their voices approach, began to quake with anxiety; and placing his door a little open, he stood by it in such a way that he could both see and hear them without being seen. When they arrived at the door of the king's apartment, which was hard by his own, they halted for a considerable time, giggling and speaking very freely of the gentlemen they had just left; and at the last, when they offered to take leave of the queen for the night, she said, that as his majesty seemed inclined to enjoy himself for some time with his lords, she would leave him his apartment by himself, that he might not be restrained in his mirth, nor have the opportunity of disturbing her. Some of the others rallied her, saying, if they ~~had~~ such a privilege, they would know better what use to make of it. She however went up with the rest to one of the little chambers in the upper story.

Though Carmichael had taken pains previously to ascertain in which of the chambers Elizabeth slept, he nevertheless followed quietly after them, and, from a dark corner, saw her enter it. That was the decisive moment—he had no resource left but to attempt an interview, the adventure was attended with imminent danger, ~~both~~ of shame and disgrace, but he

hoped that the ardour of his passion would plead some excuse for his intrusion in the eyes of Elizabeth.

Judging it necessary that he should surprise her before she undressed, though not one of the other ladies was yet gone to sleep, he lifted the latch softly, and entered behind her ; for there was not one of the chambers, save the king's, that bolted on the inside. Elizabeth bore no similitude to a number of our ladies, who are so squeamish as to fall into fits when any thing surprises or affects them. On the contrary, she was possessed of an uncommon calmness and equanimity of temper, which sometimes savoured not a little of insensibility ; and instead of being startled, and screaming out, when she saw a knight enter her chamber at that time of night, she being busied in putting up her ringlets, did not so much as discontinue her employment, but only reprimanded him in a calm whisper for his temerity, and desired him to withdraw instantly, without any farther noise. But, falling on his knees, he seized both her hands, and, in the most passionate manner, beseeched her by all the endearments of love, and by the estimation in which she held the life of one who adored her, and who was willing to sacrifice his life for her, instantly to elope with him, and become his through life, for good or for evil. " This is the best, and the most favourable moment," said he ; " the ladies are gone to their chambers ; the king and nobles are drinking themselves drunk ; I know all the passes of the forest ; we shall easily elude them to-night ; if indeed we are once missed, which I do not conceive we will. To-morrow perhaps we may be able to reach a place of safety." Elizabeth was about to reply, but he interrupted her. " Consider, my dearest Elizabeth," continued he, " before you answer me finally ; consider that Polmood is nowise worthy of you ; his years will outnumber yours three times," added he ; " his manners are blunt and uncourtly ; and it is well known

that his estates, honours, and titles, cannot once be compared with mine."

These were weighty considerations indeed. Elizabeth hesitated, and looked him stedfastly in the face, while a ray of joyful anticipation seemed to play on her lovely countenance. "It will make a great noise," said she; "the ladies will be terribly astonished." "Yes, my dear Elizabeth, they will be all astonished indeed; and some, without doubt, will be highly displeased. But if we can escape to the court of England, or France, until the first fury of the blast is overblown, your kind god-mother the queen will be happy to receive you again into her arms and household, as lady Hyndford."—That title sounded charmingly in Elizabeth's ears—she smiled—Carmichael, observing it, pursued the theme. "Consider," continued he, "which of the two titles is most likely to command respect at court—the plain, common, vulgar designation, Dame Elizabeth Hunter of Polmood; or, lady Carmichael of Hyndford?—The right honourable Countess of Hyndford?" It was all over with Polmood—Elizabeth uttered a sigh of impatience—repeated the title three or four times to herself, and forthwith asked what course he proposed for their procedure. "Come directly with me to my chamber," said he; "I will furnish you with a suit of my ~~clothes~~.—I have a couple of good horses and a trusty squire in readiness—we shall pass the steps of Glendarg before the rising of the sun, and disappoint Polmood, the king, and all his court, of a wedding for once."—"Wedding!—Disappoint the king and all his court of a wedding for once!"—unfortunate and rash expression!—It had no business there. The term *wedding* was itself enough, and too much. It glanced on Elizabeth's mind like electricity, and came not alone, but with all its concatenation of delights. "We shall have no wedding then?" said she,— "Perhaps we may contrive to have one by and by," said Carmichael. Elizabeth sighed deeply, and rested her rosy cheek

upon her left shoulder, while the pressure of her chin dimpled the polish of her fair breast.

Whether she was at that time balancing the merits of each side of the alternative which she had in her offer has never yet been thoroughly ascertained ; for at that instant they were alarmed by hearing the king tapping at some of the adjoining chamber doors, and asking who slept in each of them ; and besides, adding inquiries, in which of them he would find Elizabeth. The door of the apartment in which they stood not being quite close, they were greatly alarmed, as they knew not what was the matter, but, as they had good reason, dreaded the worst—The light and the footsteps were fast approaching ; there was not a moment to lose ; and if Elizabeth had not been more alert than her lover, they would certainly have been caught in that questionable condition. But the mind of woman is ever fruitful in expedients. It is wonderful to behold with what readiness they will often avert the most sudden and fatal surprises, even before the other sex have leisure to think of their danger. With regard to all love affairs, in particular, if a woman does not fall upon some shift to elude discovery, the exigencies are desperate indeed. This inventive faculty of the fair sex, which is so manifest on all sudden emergencies, is most kindly bestowed by the Creator of the universe and of man. The more we contemplate any of his works, whether these works are displayed in the productions of nature, or the formation of the human soul, the more will we be satisfied of his kind intentions towards all his creatures, of his regards for their happiness, and the provisions he has made for their various natures and habits. The most pure and delicate vesture under heaven, nay the virgin snow itself, is not more easily sullied than female reputation ; and when once it is sullied, where is the fountain that will ever wash out the stain ? In proportion with the liability of censure to which they are exposed, and the dangerous effects of

that censure on their future respectability and moral conduct, is bestowed that superior readiness and activity in managing all the little movements and contingents of life. If it were not for this inventive faculty, many thousands of female characters would be ruined in the eyes of the world, that are fair and unblameable, and which this alone enables the lovely wanderer among snares and toils, to preserve without blemish, till the dangerous era of youth and inexperience is overpast.

There being, as was observed, not a moment to lose, so neither was there a moment lost, from the time that Elizabeth was fully apprized of the danger to which they were both exposed. She flung off her rail, uncovered her bosom, and extinguished the light in her chamber, all ere Carmichael could once move from the spot. Determined to make one effort for the preservation of her honour, and the life of a lover who, at all events, had treated her with respect, she placed herself close behind the door, awaiting the event with firmness and resolution. But here we must leave them for a few minutes, till we explain the cause of this indecorous invasion.



CHAP. VI.

THE party that conveyed the queen and her ladies from the pavilion to the castle, on the way to their chambers, having returned to the rest, they all, at the king's request, joined in drinking a bumper to the bride's health. Polmood, in return, proposed one to the queen, which was likewise drunk off; the health of all the ladies was next drunk, and afterwards several of them by name, and amongst others the beautiful Madam Gray. By that time the most steady amongst them all were affected by the fumes of the wine, and some of them were become considerably drunk. The battles of the bygone day, in their various sports, were all fought over again, and every

man was stouter and swifter in his own estimation than his compeers. Many bets were offered, and as readily accepted, without ever being more thought of; even the lord Chamberlain Hume, who was by no means a strong man, proffered to wrestle with Polmood for 1000 merks. The latter paid little attention to all these rhodomontades, having entered into a close and humorous argument with his Majesty, who was rallying him most unmercifully about his young wife; and who at length, turning to him with a serious countenance, "Polmood," said he, "you have forgot one particularly important and necessary ceremony, and one which, as far as I know, has never been dispensed with in this realm. It is that of asking the bride, at parting with her on the bridal eve, if she had not rued. Many a bridegroom has been obliged to travel far for that very purpose, and why should you neglect it when living under the same roof." Polmood acknowledged the justice of the accusation; and likewise the fact that such a custom was prevalent; but excused himself on the grounds, that if she had relented, she had plenty of opportunities to have told him so. His Majesty however persisted in maintaining, that it was an omission of a most serious nature, and one that gave her full liberty to deny him to-morrow even before the priest, which would prove an awkward business; and that therefore he ought, in conformity to the good old custom, to go and ask the question even though the lady was in bed. Polmood objected to this on account that it was a manifest breach of decorum; but that only excited farther raillery against him; for they all cried out, "he dares not, he dares not." Polmood was nettled, and at that instant offered to go, if his Majesty would accompany him as a witness.

Whether or not the king had any sinister motives for this procedure cannot easily be ascertained; but certain it is, that he went cheerfully along with Polmood on the expedition, carrying a lighted torch in his hand, and leading the way.

Every chamber door that he came to, he tapped, asking at the same time, who slept there, until he came to that behind which Elizabeth stood with her lover at her back; and observing it not to be quite shut, instead of tapping, he peeped in, holding the torch before him. Elizabeth at that moment put her face and naked bosom by the edge of the door full in his view, and instantly pushed the door in his face, exclaiming, "What does your Majesty mean? I am undressed, you cannot come in now." And having by this manoeuvre, as she particularly intended, put out the light, she waited the issue; but instead of being agitated with terror, as most women would have been in the same situation, she could scarcely refrain from indulging in laughter; for the king, instead of returning her any answer, fell a puffing and blowing at the wick of the flambeau, thinking to make it rekindle; but, not being able to succeed, he fell a groping for his companion, "Confound her, Polmood," said he, "she has extinguished our light; what shall we do now?" "We had better ask the question in the dark, if it please your Majesty," said Polmood. "No," said the king, "come along with me, we will try to get it relumined;" then, groping his way along, with Polmood at his back, he tapped at every chamber door he came at around the circle, asking each of the ladies, if she had any light. Several denied, but at length he came to one, below which, on stooping, he espied a little glimmering light, and having by this time learned what lady was in each chamber, he called at that too, but was not a little startled at hearing the voice of her within—It was the queen—but, affecting not to know, he lifted the latch, and pretending great modesty, did not so much as look in, but only held in the torch with the one hand, begging of her to relight it, which she did, and returned it to his hand.

Carmichael, having by these means escaped quietly, and with perfect deliberation, to his own chamber, Elizabeth laid

herself down, not a little pleased at the success of her expedient, but somewhat astonished what could have occasioned this extraordinary scrutiny. The two champions returned to Elizabeth's door—the king tapped gently, and asked if she was in undress still. She begged a thousand pardons of his royal Majesty for the trouble which she had caused him, which happened solely from the circumstance of his having surprised her in deshabelle, that he might now enter, and let her know what his royal pleasure was with her. James entered cautiously, but took care to keep his flambeau behind him in case of further accidents, and then began by asking pardon in his turn of Elizabeth for his former abrupt entrance; but seeing that her door was not altogether shut, he said, he judged the chamber to be unoccupied—that he had come at her lover's request, in order to be a witness to a question he had to propose to her. He then desired Polmood to proceed, who, stepping forward much abashed, told her bluntly, that all he had to ask was, whether or not she had repented of the promise she had made him of marriage? Elizabeth, not having been previously instructed of any such existing ceremony in Scotland, did not readily comprehend the meaning or drift of this question; or else, thinking it proper to avail herself of it, in order to provide for certain subsequent arrangements which had very lately been proposed to her, answered with perfect good humour, that she understood Polmood had himself relented, and wished to throw the blame upon her. "I therefore tell you, sir," said she, "that I *have* rued our agreement, and that most heartily."—"Bravo!" cried the king, as loud as he could shout, pushing Polmood out at the door before him. He then closed it, and without waiting a moment, ran down the stair laughing, and shouting aloud "hurra! hurra! The bride has rued! the bride has rued! Polmood is undone." He hasted to the pa-

vilion, and communicated the jest to his nobles, who all laughed abundantly at Polmood's expense.

The staircase of the Crawmel castle was in one of the towers, and from that there were doors which opened to each of the floors. The upper story which contained the twelve chambers in which the queen and ladies were that night lodged, was fitted up so, that it formed a circle. All the chamber doors were at equal distances, and the door which led to the staircase was exactly in the circle with the rest, and in every respect the same. Now Polmood, not being at all satisfied with the answer he had received from Elizabeth, and unwilling to return to the company without some farther explanation, turned round as the king departed, dark as it was, and putting his mouth to the latch-hole of the door, began to expostulate on the subject. Elizabeth, perceiving that he was somewhat intoxicated, desired him to withdraw; for that it was highly improper for him to remain there in the dark alone, and added, that she would tell him all about it to-morrow.

Now Polmood was not only half drunk, but he was, beside, greatly stunned with the answer he had received; and moreover, to add to his misfortune, the king had, either in the midst of his frolic, shut the door behind him, or else it had closed of itself. The consequence of all this was, that when Polmood turned about to depart, he soon discovered that it was like to be a very intricate business. By means of going round the circle, with one hand pressed against the wall, he found that the doors were all shut, and that there was no possibility of distinguishing one of them from another. He could easily have opened any of them, because none of them were bolted; but in doing so, he had no assurance that he would not light upon the queen, or some sleeping countess, which might procure him much disgrace and ridicule. He

was a modest bashful gentleman, fearful of giving offence, and would not have been guilty of such a piece of rudeness for the world ; he knew not what to do ; to call was in vain, for the apartment was vaulted below, therefore he could alarm none save the ladies. He had but one chance to find the right door for twelve to go wrong ; the odds were too great for him to venture. He would gladly have encroached again upon Elizabeth, but he knew no more of her door than the others.

There is every reason to believe that the fumes of the wine tended greatly to increase Polmood's dilemma ; for it is well known how much that impairs the reasoning faculties of some men, and what singular fancies it creates in their minds. Be that as it may, Polmood could think only of one expedient whereby to extricate himself from his whimsical situation, and the idea had no sooner struck him than he proceeded to put it in practice. It was to listen at each door, if there was any person breathing within ; and if there was no person breathing within, he thought he might conclude that to be the door he wanted. In order to effect this with more certainty, he kneeled softly on the floor, and laid his ear close to the bottom of each door, creeping always to the next, as soon as he had certified that a lady was within. It was a long time ere he could be satisfied of some, they breathed so softly—he kept an account in his memory of the doors he past, and had nearly got round them all, when he heard, as he thought, a door softly and cautiously opened. No light appearing, Polmood judged that he was overheard ; and that this was one of the ladies listening what he was about. He was on the point of speaking to her, and begging for pardon and assistance, when he heard the sound of footsteps approaching behind him. He was resting on his hands and knees at a chamber door, with his head hanging down in the act of listening—he kept his position, pricking up his ears, and scarcely able to hear for the

palpitations of his heart ; but it was not long ere a man stumbled on his feet, fell above him, and crushed his face against the floor. Polmood swore a loud oath, and being irritated, he laid furiously hold of the stranger's heel, and endeavoured to detain him, but he wrenched it from his grasp, and in a moment was gone. Polmood then judging that it must have been some one of the courtiers stealing to his mistress, and hearing the door close behind him, hasted to his feet, and followed to the sound, hoping to escape after him—opened the same door, as he thought, and rushed forward, but at the third step he foundered over something that interposed his progress ; and, to his utter confusion, found that he had alighted with all his weight across a lady in her bed, who was screaming out murder fire and ravishment, in a voice so loud, and so eldritch, that Polmood's ears were deafened, and his joints rendered utterly powerless through vexation and dismay. He tried to get up and escape, but the injured fair laid hold of his coat, pulled it over his head, and as he scorned to hurt her, or resist her frantic violence by violence in return, in that manner she held him fast, continuing all the while her violent outcries. The rest of the ladies awaking, set up one universal yell of murder—sprang from their beds, and endeavoured to escape, some one way and some another, running against each other, and screaming still the louder.—Their cries alarmed the guards, and these the courtiers, who all rushing in promiscuously with lights, beheld one of the most ludicrous scenes that ever was witnessed by man.—A whole circular apartment full of distressed dames, skipping into their holes, as the light appeared, like so many rabbits ; and in one apartment, the door of which was shut, but to which they were directed by the cries, the right honourable Lady Hume, holding the worthy bridegroom, the bold, the invincible Norman of Polmood ! with his coat drawn over his head, in her own bed-chamber, and

abusing him all the while, as a depraved libertine and a ravisher. Polmood was rendered quite speechless, or at least that he attempted to advance by way of palliation was never once heard, so loud was the mixed noise of laughter, ridicule, and abuse; and the king, with a grave face, observed, that unless he could give security for his future good behaviour, he would be obliged to confine him in the keep until such time as he could be got married, that then perhaps the virtue of other men's wives might be preserved from his outrageous violence.

CHAP. VII.

THE transactions of that night were not brought to a conclusion, by the unlucky adventure which befel the Laird of Polmood. On the contrary, that was only a prologue to farther mistakes, of greater atrocity, and of consequences more serious.

The king did not again return to the pavilion, but retired to his chamber as they came down stairs. The Earl of Hume, having got extremely drunk, and fallen into an argument with another knight, who was much in the same condition, about some affair of border chivalry, of which their ideas totally differed, they were both become so warm and so intent upon the subject, that they never once perceived when the late alarm was given, nor when the company left them, in order to succour the distressed ladies. But when they returned with Polmood guarded as a prisoner in jest, and related the circumstances, the earl got into a furious passion, and, right or wrong, insisted on running Polmood through the body. "What, Sir?" said he: "because you cannot get a wife of your own, does that give you a right to

go and take violent possession of mine? No, sir! draw out your sword, and I'll give you to know the contrary; I'll carve you, sir, into a great number of pieces, sir."

When the earl was in the height of this passion, and had stripped off a part of his clothes to fight a duel with Polmood by torch light, one of the lords whispered in his ear, that Polmood only *mistook the bed*, that was all; and that lady Hume had acquitted herself in such a manner, by taking him prisoner, that it reflected immortal honour upon her and all her connexions.

This pleased the lord chamberlain so well, that he was never weary of shaking hands with Polmood, and drinking to him; but he did not forget to observe each time, that he thought Polmood would take care in future how he mistook lady Hume for another. The earl grew every minute more and more pleased on account of his lady's resolute and intrepid behaviour, and being a sprightly ingenious gentleman, began singing a song, which he swore was extempore, and which was indeed believed to be so; by all present, as none of them had ever heard it before. It is said to be still extant, and to be yet sung in several parts of Scotland, which certainly is not very probable. It began "I hae ane wyffe o' mi ain." In short his enthusiasm and admiration of his lady arose to such a height, that he took up a resolution to go and spend the remainder of the night in her company. A number of his merry associates encouraged this proposal with all the plausible arguments they could suggest, reminding him that the chamber was in sooth his own—that he had only given it up in favour of her ladyship for a few nights, and she could in nowise grudge him a share of it for one night, especially as there was no rest to be had in the tent. Thus encouraged, the earl arose and went towards the castle, singing, with great glee,

I hae ane wyffe o' mi ain ;
I'll be behadden til nae bodye ;
I'll nowther borey nor lenne,
Swap nor niffer wi' nae bodye.

The porter and guards at the gate objected strongly to his admission, and began to remonstrate with his lordship on its impropriety : but he drew his sword, and swore he would sacrifice them, every mother's son, if they offered to debar his entrance to his own wife. It was in vain that they reminded him there was no room in her ladyship's apartment for any person beside herself, which they said he himself well knew. He d—d them for liars, and officious knaves, who meddled with matters about which they had no business : said it was his concern to find room, and theirs to obey his orders, or abide the consequences ; at the same time, he spit upon his hand and squared, in order forthwith to begin the slaughter of the porters : and as they were afraid of resisting the determined resolution of the lord chamberlain, they suffered him to pass, after leaving his sword behind him, and promising on his honour to make no noise.

The earl, by dint of determined perseverance, found his way, amid utter darkness, to the upper story of the castle, where his beloved lady and her fair associates were all enjoying sweet repose after the sports and merriment of the late day.—He entered with great caution—counted the doors to the right hand with accurate exactness, in order to ascertain his lady's chamber—opened the door softly, and advanced stooping, in search of her lowly but desirable couch—but when he proceeded to clasp her in his arms in a transport of love and admiration—"O horrible ! most horrible !" he found that she was already lying fast locked in the arms of a knight, whose cheek was resting upon hers, and his long shaggy beard

flowing around her soft neck. It is impossible to conceive the fury into which this discovery threw the enamoured earl. He entertained not the slightest doubt but that it was Peimood; and resolving to make an example of him, he laid hold of him by the beard with one hand, and by the throat with the other, determined to strangle him on the spot. But the desperate innamorato sprung upon his assailant like a tiger from his den—struck the lord chamberlain violently on the head—overturned him on the floor, and forthwith escaped. The earl followed as fast as he was able to the door—gave the alarm with a loud voice, and hastily returned to secure the other accomplice in wickedness and shame. He flung himself upon the bed—laid violent hands upon her—swearing that she too should not escape, and that he would inflict upon her the most condign punishment. The lady bore all with silence and meekness, until she heard the rest of the courtiers approaching, and then she took hold of him by the hair of the head with both hands, held him down thereby, and screamed as loud as she was able.

The waggish lords, who had excited the earl to this expedition, certain that in the state he then was, he was sure to breed some outrage in the castle, were all in waiting without the gate, ready to rush in on the least alarm being given. Consequently, it was not long before they entered with lights, and among the rest the king in his night-gown and slippers. They entered the chamber from which the cries proceeded; and, to their no small astonishment, discovered the lord chamberlain engaged in close combat—not with his own lady, as he had unwarrantably supposed—but with the beautiful lady Ann Gray, who was weeping bitterly, and crying out to revenge her on that wicked and barbarous lord.

The merriment of the party at this discovery would have been without bounds, had not the king appeared to be seriously displeased. He ordered lord Hume to be carried down

stairs instantly, and confined in the keep until he should answer for his conduct. The earl attempted to remonstrate; assuring his majesty that he had only *mistaken the bed*; but his ebriety being apparent, that had no effect upon the king, who declared he could not suffer such liberties to be taken with any lady under their royal protection with impunity, and that perhaps the lord chamberlain might have yet to atone for his rashness and temerity by the loss of his head.

The courtiers were all astonished at this threatening, and at the king's peremptory manner and resentment, as no one could for a moment suppose that the earl had indeed any designs upon the person of lady Ann Gray; and when at length he protested, in mitigation of the crime alleged against him, that he actually caught another man in the chamber with her, the king was still more wroth, asserting that to be impossible, ~~as the castle then was~~, unless it were himself who was there, which he hoped lord Hume did not mean to insinuate in the presence, or at least in the hearing, of his royal consort—that, as far as he knew, there was not another person within the walls of the castle, and that such a malicious attempt to asperse the young lady's honour was even worse than her crime. “Let the castle be instantly searched,” said he, “and if there is no other person found in it, save the ladies, and those now admitted, I shall order the head to be taken from this uncourtly and slanderous earl early in the morning. Was it not enough that he should attempt the violation of a royal ward, of the highest birth and respect, but that, when frustrated, he should endeavour to affix an indelible stain upon her honour, and in the accusation implicate his sovereign, to the lessening of his respectability in the eyes of his queen and his whole nation. Let the castle be searched strictly and instantly.”

The earl was confined in the keep—the castle-gate was double guarded—the castle was searched for men throughout,

and at last Carmichael was found concealed in his own chamber, and half dressed. No doubt then remained with the courtiers but that he was the guilty person with regard to Madam Gray.

The king appeared visibly astonished when Carmichael was discovered, but affecting to be of the same opinion as the rest, he accompanied them down stairs—locked Carmichael in the keep beside the Lord Chamberlain—dismissed the rest to the pavilion, charging them on pain of death not to attempt entering the gate of the castle again, till once they received his orders; and having caused it to be locked, he retired to his apartment.

The displeasure of the king acted like electricity on the minds of the hitherto jovial party. Their organs of sensation were benumbed at once, and their reasoning completely quashed. They durst not even speak their minds freely, ~~to each other~~ on the subject, afraid of having their remarks overhauled at next days examination; but they all judged Carmichael to be in a bad predicament, considering how great a favourite lady Ann was with the king. It was then first discovered, that Carmichael had been absent from the pavilion, from the time that the ladies retired, and how long previously to that could not be recollected; consequently, they were all satisfied that they were two lovers, and that the meeting had been preconcerted, although their passion had hitherto been concealed from the eyes of all the court. The whole matter appeared now to them perfectly obvious; whereas there was not a single incident, save one, on which they put a right construction.

A short and profound sleep ushered that group of noble sportsmen into the healthful morning breeze of the mountain, and the beams of the advancing sun, and finished the adventures of that memorable night, but not their consequences. The examination which follows in the next chapter, will assist somewhat in the explication of the one, and the subsequent narrative of the other.

CHAP. IX.

THE animal spirits have certainly a natural medium level, at which, if suffered to remain, they will continue to flow with a constant and easy motion. But if the spring be drained to the sediment for the supply of a lengthened and frenzied hilarity, it must necessarily remain some time low before it can again collect force sufficient to exert its former energy.

Fair and lovely rose that morning on the forest of Meggatdale—it was the third of September—the day destined by the king and queen for the marriage of their beloved Elizabeth. The dawning first spread a wavy canopy of scarlet and blue over all the eastern hemisphere ; but when the sun mounted from behind the green hills of Yarrow, the fairy curtain was updrawn into the viewless air. The shadows of the mountains were then so beautifully etched, and their natural tints so strongly marked, that it seemed as if the mountains themselves lay cradled in the bosom of the lovely lake—but while the eye yet rested on the adumbrated phenomenon, the spectre hills, with all their inverted woods and rocks, melted away in their dazzling mirror.

It was a scene that might have stirred the most insensate heart to raptures of joy ; yet the queen of Scotland and her ladies were demure and sullen, even though their morning walk was over a garnish of small but delicate mountain flowers, belled with the dews of heaven—though fragrance was in every step, and health in every gale that strayed over the purple heath.

The king and his nobles were even more sullen than they—the king took his morning walk by himself—his nobles saun-

tered about in pairs, but they discoursed only to their hounds, whose gambols and mimic hunts were checked by the unwonted gloom on the brows of their masters. "The two aggressors were still lying in the dismal keep, both in the highest chagrin; the one at his disappointment in love, the other at his disgrace. Such are the motley effects of intemperance, and such the importance by the inebriated fancy attached to trifles, which, in moments of calm reflection, would never have been regarded.

The king returning, threw himself into his easy chair; the queen paid her respects to him, and interceded for the imprisoned lords—he ordered them to be brought before him, and summoned all the rest of the nobles to attend. When the news of the examination spread, the ladies came running together, some of them dressed, and some early half-dressed, to hear it. A trial of a delinquent who has come under any suspicions with respect to their sex is to them a most transcendent treat. But the king rising, beseeched them kindly to withdraw, because, in the course of elucidating the matter, some things might be expressed offensive to their modesty. They assured his majesty that there was no danger of such a circumstance occurring; but he persisted in his request, and they were obliged reluctantly to retire.

The king first called on Polmood to give an account of all that befel him in the vault of the twelve chambers; and how he came to make the unmannerly attack on the lady Hume, all which he was required to answer on oath. The speeches which follow are copied literally from the hand-writing of *Archembald Qhitelaw airtshdeiken of Lowden and cekreter to kinge Jemys*. The MSS. are now in the possession of Mr J. Brown, Edin. and fully confirm the authenticity of the story, if any doubts remained of the tradition. The first, as being the most original, is given at full length; it is entitled, *Ane speetsh and defenns maide by Normaund Huntyr*

of Poomoode on ane myle of royet and lemanrye with Elenir Ladye of Hume.

“Mucht it pleiz mai sovrayne lege, not to trowe sikkan euil and kittel dooins of yer ain trew cervente, and maist lethful lejeman; nor to lychtlefye myne honer sa that I can ill bruke; by eyndling, that, withoutten dreddour I shulde gaung til broozle ane fayir deme, ane honest mannis wyffe, and mynnie to twa bairnis; and that in the myddis of ane lostful queenes. I boud haife bein dementyde to kicke ane stoure, to the skaithinge of hir preclair pounyis, and hairshillinge myne ayin kewis. Nethyng mai lege was ferder fra myne heid thanne onye sikkan wylld sneckdrawinge and pawkerye. But quhan yer Maigestye jinkyt fra me in the baux, and left me in the darknesse, I was baiss to kum again wi’ sikkan ane ancere; and stude summe tyme swutheryng what it avysat me neiste to doo in thilke barbulye. At the launge, I stevellit backe, and lowten downe, set mai nebb to the gell in the dor, and fleechyt Eleesabett noore to let us woffell in the waretyme of awir raik. But scho skyrit to knuife me, or steccarlye on thilke sauchning, and heiryne that I was wilsum and glunchie, I airghit at keuillyng withe myr in that thraward paughty meode, and baidna langer to haigell. But ben doitrifyed with thilke drynke and sachless and dizzye with lowtyn, and thilke lofte as derke as pick, I ilka spunk of ettlyn quhair the dor laye. And thaun saupyt and gavit about quhille I grewe perfittlye donnarit, I trowit the castil to be snuiffyng and birlyng round; fore- by that it was heezing upon the tae syde, and myntyng to whommil me. I had seendil watherit a selwyn raddour, but boddin that I wad coup, that I muchtna gie a dooffe, I hur- klit litherlye down, and craup forret alang on myne looffis and myne schynes, herkyng at ilka dorlief gyffe ther was onye ane snifteryng withyn side. Outhir I owirharde, or thoct I owirharde sliepyng soughs ahynte thilk haile, and begoude to kiek sklenderye houpes of wyunning out of myne revellet fank unsperkyt with scheme or desgrece. Ben richt laith to rin rashlye, with ane posse, on the kyttes or the chaftis of thilke deir eich kimmers, that war lying doveryng and snuffyng, and spelderyng, rekelesse and mistrowyns of all harmis, I was eidentlye hotterying alang with muckle paishens. I was lyinge endslang at ane dor, quhan I harde ane chylde unhaspe thilke sneck, as moothlye as ane snail quhan scho gaungs snowking

owir thilk droukyt swaird ; but thilk dor gyit ay thilk tother whesk, and thilk tother jerg, and oore I gatt tyme til syne mysel, ane grit man trippyt on myne feit, and fell belly flaught on me with ane dreadful noozle, quhille myne curpin was jermunnlyt, and myne grunzie knoityd with ane cranch against thilke lofte. I cursyt him in wraith, and myndig to taigel him, claught haud of his kootie whilke I gyit ane hele of ane nibble. Oore I gatt to myne knyie he elyit, garryng thilk door clashe ahynt him. I striffit till thilke samen plesse as gypelye as I culde—putt up thilk samen dor as I thought and ran on—but Cryste quhair suld I lichte ! but on thilke dafte syde of ane feil madame ! Myne heid mellyt thilk biggyng, and I was klicn stoundyt and daveryt. Myne ledde sychit and mummlyt, pitting me in ane dreidfulle fyke ; and sae fummylyng til ryse, scho trowit I had bein gumpyng, and sett up sic ane yirlich skrighe that my verie sennyns sloomyt and myne teith chackyt in myne heid. Scho brainzellyt up in ane foorye and dowlicappyd me, and ben richt laithe to lay ane laithless finger on her, I brankytt in myne gram, and laye smooryng quhille yee clum fra the bar-mykene and redde us. Thys is thilke hale and feil troothe, as I houpe for merse bye our bessyt ladye.

The king then asked him if he was certain it was a man that stumbled over him in the dark ? Polmood swore he was certain, for that it was weightier and stronger than any three women in the forest, and besides he was farther certified by feeling his clothes and leg. The king still continued to dwell on that subject, as seeming to doubt of it alone ; but Polmood, having again sworn to the certainty of the whole, he was dismissed and forgiven, on condition that he asked pardon of Lady Hume, her Majesty, and all the ladies.

The Lord Chamberlain was then called up, and being accused of "*Misleeryt racket and gruesome assault on thilke body of Lady Anne Grey,*" he began as follows :

" Mai maist grashous and soveryne lege, I do humbly be-seetsh yer pardonne for myne grit follye and mismainners, and do intrete you til attrIBUTE thatn haile frolyke to yer Majestye's liberaliteye, and no til nae roode and wuckit desyne. I hae nae pley to urge, only that in fayth and troothe I mys-

take thilke bed, as myne ayin guid deme, and Lady Grey well baith weil allow; and gin I didna fynde ane man in thilke bed——”

Here it appears the king had interrupted him; for there is no more of this speech in Whitlaw's hand, save some broken sentences which cannot be connected. His majesty is said to have called out angrily, “hold, hold, no more of that: we have heard enough. Carmichael,” continued he, turning about to him, “tell me on your honour, and tell me truly; were you in the room of the twelve chambers last night in the dark, or were you not? Carmichael answered, with great promptness, that he was. “Was it you who stumbled over Polmood?” “It was indeed.” “Then tell me, sir, what was your business there?” Carmichael bowed, and begged to be excused, assuring his majesty, that though he would willingly yield his life for him, that ~~he~~ he would not yield at that time. “I thank you,” said the king, “I know it all. I am glad you have some honour left; had you publicly divulged your motives, you should never have seen the noon of this day. Carmichael! you have been ingrateful, unwary, and presumptuous! I have trusted you near my person for three years, but we must take care that you shall never insult royalty again. Conduct him to the keep, till our farther pleasure is manifested. My Lord Chamberlain, you must ask pardon of Madam Grey, the queen, and all the ladies.” The nobles did not comprehend the king's awards, but he knew more and saw farther into the matter than they did.

CHAP. X.

THE lords having, by desire, retired, the ladies were next sent for, and examined one by one, after being informed that none

of them were required to divulge any thing relating to themselves, but only what they heard passing with regard to others.

There was such a flood of mystery and surmise now poured in upon the king, that he felt himself utterly at a loss to distinguish truth from fiction. According to their relations there had been great battles—men cursing and swearing, and occasionally falling down upon the floor with such a shock as if the roof of the castle had fallen in. There were besides whisperings heard, and certain noises which were well described, but left to the judge for interpretation. In a word, it appeared from the relations of the fair enthusiasts, that all the nobles of the court had been there, and the king himself among them; and that every lady in the castle had been engaged with one paramour *at least*—the narrator always excepted. James would gladly have put a stop to this torrent of scandal and insinuation, but, having once begun, he was obliged to hear them all out; each being alike anxious to vindicate herself by fixing the guilt upon her neighbours.

There was however one circumstance came out, which visibly affected James. It was affirmed by two different ladies, one of whom, at least, he had good reasons for believing, that there was actually one in the chamber with Elizabeth, when he and Polmood came up in their frolic, and when she contrived so artfully to extinguish the light. Several circumstances occurred to his mind at once in confirmation of this accusation, but he affected as much as he was able to receive it with the same indifference that he received the rest. He cast one look at Elizabeth, but he was too much of a gentleman to suffer it to remain—he withdrew his piercing eye in a moment—smiled, and asked questions about something else. When they had done, Elizabeth rose to explain, and had just begun by saying, “My dear lord, it is very very hard indeed, that I cannot pay my evening services to the virgin,

but I must be suspected of"—Here she paused, and the lively and petulant Ann Grey, springing up and making a low courtsey, said, in a whimpering tone, "My dear lord! it is very hard indeed, that Carmichael cannot pay his evening services to a virgin but he must be suspected of."—The manner in which she pronounced this, and in particular the emphasis which she laid upon the concluding preposition, set all the ladies a giggling; and the king, being pleased with the sly humour of his favourite, and seeing Elizabeth put to the blush, he started up, and clasping her in his arms, kissed her, and said, "There is no need of any defence or apology, my dear Elizabeth, I am too well convinced of your purity to regard the insinuations of that volatile imp. We all know whereto her sarcasms tend; she has the Earl of Hume in her mind, and the gentleman who knocked him down last night; she wishes you to be thought like herself, but it will not do. We shall soon see you placed in a situation beyond the power of her wicked biting jests, and of court scandal; while she may continue to sigh and ogle with knights, wreck her disappointment on all her acquaintances, and sigh for that she cannot have." "Heigh-ho!" cried the shrewd minx, in a tone which again set all the party in a titter.

After this, the king, having dismissed them, sent for Carmichael, and said unto him. "Carmichael, I am shocked at your behaviour. The attempt which you have made on a royal ward, on the very eve of her marriage with a man of honour and integrity, whom we esteem, manifests a depravity of mind, and a heart so dead to every sense of gratitude, that I am ashamed at having taken such a knight into my household. Whatever were your motives for this disgraceful and clandestine procedure, whether the seduction of her person or of her affections from the man who adores her, and who has obtained our sanction to her hand, they must have been wrong, and far from that line of respect which, in return for

our confidence, it was your bounden duty to pursue. I therefore will, that you quit the society of which you have been an unworthy member for the space of three years, in the course of half an hour ; and if at any time within that period you are found within twenty miles of our residence, your life shall answer for it—this I shall cause to be proclaimed to the country at large. I desire to hear no intreaty or excuse.”

Carmichael bowed, and retiring from the presence in the utmost trepidation, he and his groom, the only attendant he had, were both ready mounted in less than ten minutes ; and being driven, in some degree, to a state of desperation, he rode boldly up to the castle-gate, and desired a word with Elizabeth. This was a most imprudent action, as it in some degree divulged the cause of his expulsion from the court, which it was the king's chief design to conceal, or gloss over with some other pretence.

When the squire in waiting carried up his demand, Elizabeth was sitting between the queen and the lady Hamilton ; and acting from the impulse of the moment, as she too often did, she was rising to comply with the request, when a look from the king, which she well knew how to interpret, caused her to sink again into her seat, like a deer that has been aroused by a false alarm. “ What answer shall I return ? ” said the squire, who had only witnessed her spontaneous motion, but received no order ; that Elizabeth has nothing to say to him, said the king. The squire returned down stairs. “ Elizabeth has nothing to say to you, my lord.” Carmichael turned his horse slowly around, as if not knowing what he did. “ Was it she that returned me this answer ? ” said he ; “ Yes sir,” said the man, walking carelessly back into the castle. That word pierced Carmichael to the heart ; he again turned his horse slowly around, and the porter said he seemed as if he had lost sight of the ground. He appeared desirous of

leaving some message, but he rode off without uttering another syllable, and instead of shaping his course homeward as was expected, he crossed the Meggat, went round the Breaken Hill, and seemed bound for the border.

Though it is perhaps perfectly well understood, it may not be improper to mention here by way of explanation, that when Carmichael escaped from Elizabeth's chamber in the dark, and had shunk quietly down to his own, in a few minutes he heard the king come running down the stair, laughing, and calling out that the bride had rued; and not having the slightest suspicion that Polmood would remain among the ladies in the dark, he judged him to have gone along with the king. He was extremely happy on hearing the king exclaiming that Elizabeth had taken her word again, not doubting but that it was in consequence of the conversation he had with her; and in order to strengthen her resolution, or prevail upon her instantly to elope with him, he took the opportunity of stealing again to her apartment before any other irruption of the revellers into the castle should take place; but in this way, and when at the very point at which he aimed, he stumbled upon the forlorn Polmood, whose voice and grasp he well knew, and from whom he narrowly escaped.

Carmichael was now gone, and Elizabeth did not believe that any person knew of her amour with him. She thought that the king was merely jealous of him and Lady Ann Gray, yet she could not help considering herself as the cause of the noble youth's disgrace, and for the first time in her life felt her *heart* interested in the person or concerns of another. Perhaps her passion for admiration prompted the feeling, for the circumstance had deprived her of a principal admirer; but it is probable that a sentiment more tender mixed with the regret she felt at his departure.

The king, who perceived well how matters stood, was considerably alarmed for his fair ward, both on account of her

bewitching beauty and accomplishments, and her insatiable desire of excelling all others of her sex ; but more on account of her rash thoughtless manner of acting. He entertained no doubt of her stainless purity, but he knew that a great deal more was required in order to maintain her character uncontaminated in the eyes of the world—that caution and prudence were as requisite as the others, and that purity of heart, and innocency of intention, instead of proving shields against the aspersions of calumny, often induce to that gayety and freedom of demeanour, which attaches its most poignant and venomous shafts. Of this caution and prudence Elizabeth seemed destitute. Her own word, with that of both her royal guardians, was pledged to Polmood, yet notwithstanding all this, he dreaded that she had ~~admitted~~ ^{admitted} a knight into her chamber at midnight, and had ~~artfully effected his~~ ^{artfully effected} escape, within nine hours of the time appointed for her nuptials. He could not judge Carmichael's pretensions to have been honourable from his manner of proceeding, and he trembled for the impressions he might have made upon her inexperienced heart, subversive of honour, faith, and virtue ; especially when he considered the answer she had returned to Polmood the very minute after Carmichael had left her.

As for Polmood, he had, as yet, no suspicions of Carmichael nor any man living ; but the answer he had received sunk deep into his heart ; for he absolutely adored Elizabeth, and feared he had offended her by some part of his behaviour, and that she had actually repented of her promise to him on that account. He knew not to whom first to address himself, and wandered about all that morning, with a countenance so rueful that nothing in this age will ever compare with it.

The king put his arm within Elizabeth's, and led her to the Balcony. The day was clear, and the scene on which they looked around, wild and romantic. The high mountains, the straggling woods, the distant lake, and the limpid river, with

its hundred branches, winding through vallies covered with brake and purple heath, whose wild variety of light and shade the plough had never marred.—The kid, the lamb, the leveret, and the young deer, feeding or sporting together in the same green halt, formed altogether a scene of rural simplicity, and peaceful harmony, such as the eye of a Briton shall never again look upon.

“We shall have a sweet day for your wedding, Elizabeth,” said the king. Elizabeth cast her eyes towards the brow of the hill, where Carmichael had but a few minutes before vanished, and remained silent. The king was agitated; “you was an effectual rub you gave the bridegroom last night,” continued he; “I owe you a kiss, and a frock of purple silk beside, for it. I would not have missed the jest for an hundred bonnet pieces, and as many merks to boot; you are a most exquisite girl.” Never was flattery lost on the ear of a woman! especially if that woman was possessed of youth and beauty. Elizabeth smiled, and seemed highly pleased with the compliment paid to her ingenuity. “What a loss it is,” continued James, “that we cannot push the jest a little farther. Suppose we should try?”

“Oh! by all means!” said Elizabeth, “let us carry the jest a little farther.”

“Polmood is in sad taking already,” said the king, “were you to persist in your refusal a little longer he would certainly hang himself.” Elizabeth smiled again. “But the worst of it is, he will take it so heinously amiss. I know his proud heart well, that all the world will not persuade him ever to ask you again; and then, if the match is, in our vain humour, broke off, it is irretrievable ruin to you.”

“Ruin to me! what does your Majesty mean?”

“Yes, certain ruin to you; for the court and all the kingdom will say that he has slighted and refused you, and you know we cannot help what people say. You know they

will say it was because he and I surprised a man in your chamber at midnight, and much more than that they will say. They know that you could not, and would not resist our will, and therefore they will infallibly regard you as an offcast, and you will be flouted and shunned by the whole court. It would almost break my heart to see those who now envy and imitate you, turning up their noses as you pass them."

"But I will inform them; I will swear to them that it was not so," said Elizabeth, almost crying.

"That is the readiest way to make them believe that it was so," said the king. "We shall, besides, lose an excellent and splendid wedding, in which I hoped to see you appear to peculiar advantage, the wonder and admiration of all ranks and degrees; but that ~~is~~ nothing." Elizabeth gave him a glance of restless impatience; "~~after all~~ I think we must venture to give Polmood a farther refusal for the joke's sake; even in the worst case I do not know but an old maid is as happy as many a married lady."

These few, seemingly spontaneous sentences, presented to the mind of Elizabeth a picture, altogether so repulsive, that she scarcely had patience to listen until the king concluded; and when he had done she remained silent, first turned round the one bracelet, then the other, fetched a slight sigh, and looked the king in the face.

"I think that for the humour of the jest you ought to persist in your refusal;" continued James.

"I have often heard your Majesty say, that we should never let the plough stand to kill a mouse," said Elizabeth.

"I never saw *long jokes* come to much good." ~

"Upon my soul I believe you are right after all," returned the king; "you have more sense in your little finger than most ladies have in all. It is not easy to catch you in the wrong; I suppose the wedding must go on?"

“ I suppose it must,” said Elizabeth, pleased with the idea of her acuteness and discernment. She was again turning her eyes toward the brow of the Breaken hill, but the king changed sides with her, linking his left arm in her right, and led her at a sharp walk round the balcony, commending her prudence and discretion as much above her years, and expatiating on the envy and spleen of the court ladies, and the joy they would have manifested if the marriage agreement had been finally dissolved. From that he broke off, and descanted on the amusements and processions in which they were to be engaged, and even on the dresses and jewels in which such and such ladies were likely to appear ; until he had winded up Elizabeth’s fancy to the highest pitch ; for it was always on the wing watching for change of place, and new treasures of vain delight. Without giving her time for any further quiet reflection, he hurried her away to the great hall, where the queen and her attendants remained. “ Make haste, make haste, my ladies,” said he ; “ you seem to forget that we have this day to ride to the Maiden chapel, and from thence to the castle of Nidpath, where I have ordered preparations to be made for the ensuing festival. Falgeat is high, and the braes of Hundleshope steep ; make haste, my ladies, make haste.”

The order of the day seemed hitherto scarcely well understood, but when the king had thus expressed his will, in such apparent haste and good humour, away tripped she, and away tripped she, each lady to her little wardrobe and portable mirror. The king ran down stairs to issue the same orders in the pavilion, where a plentiful breakfast of cakes, venison, and milk was set in order, and where the nobles had begun to assemble ; but on his way he perceived Polmood walking rapidly by the side of the burn, with his hands clasped behind his back, and his bonnet over his brow, he heard not, nor saw what was going on. The king accosted him in a hasty careless manner, “ Polmood, why are you sauntering there ? the ladies are

quite ready ! the bride is ready for mounting her horse ! fy ! fy ! Polmood, the ladies will all be obliged to wait for you." Polmood ran towards the burn to wash his face ; but recollecting something else, he turned, and ran towards the tent ; then, stopping short all of a sudden, he turned back again, and ran towards the burn, " I'll be shot to dead with an arrow if I know what to do," said he, as he passed the king this last time with his bonnet on. " And I'll be shot too," said the king, " if you know what you are doing just now—make haste, make haste, Polmood ! you have not time to be sauntering and running to and fro in this manner,—fy ! fy ! that the ladies should be obliged to wait for the bridegroom !"

The king was highly diverted by Polmood's agitation and embarrassment, which he attributed to his violent passion, with its concomitant hopes and fears ; and, having thus expelled in one moment his dread of losing Elizabeth, and at the same time, while his senses were all in a flutter, put him into such a terrible hurry, he retired within the door of the tent, and watched his motions for some time without being observed. Polmood washed his hands and face in the stream without delay, and perceiving that he had nothing wherewith to dry them, he tried to do it with the tail of his coat, but that being too short, though he almost doubled himself, he could not bring it in contact with his face. He then ran across the green to the servant's hall, stooping and winking all the way, while the water poured from his beard. In his hurry he left his fine plumed bonnet by the side of the burn, which the king lifted and hid, and afterwards warned his nobles to prepare for the cavalcade ; telling them, that the marriage of Polmood with Elizabeth was to be celebrated at Nid-path for several days.

CHAP. XI.

THE rural breakfast over, our noble party mounted and rode away from the castle of Crawmel. The lightness of the breeze—the presence of so much beauty, royalty, and respect; together with the joyous occasion, completely eradicated from their minds the effects of last night's intemperance and misrule. They were again all in high spirits, and scoured the links of Meggat, so full of mirth and glee, that every earthly care was flung to the wind, in which, too, many a lovely lock and streaming ribbon floated.

If there is any one adventitious circumstance in life which invariably exhilarates the mind, and buoys up the spirits to the highest pitch, it is that of a large party of men and women setting out on an expedition on horseback. Of this party, excluding grooms, pages, and other attendants, there were upwards of forty, the flower of the Scottish nation. The followers scarcely amounted to that number, so little was James at all of any harm within the realm.

On their way they came to the castle of Pearce Cockburn, who then accompanied the king. He compelled them all to halt and drink wine at his gate; but when the foremost twelve had taken their glasses, and were about to drink to the health of the bride and bridegroom, they looked around in vain for one of them; the bridegroom was lost no one knew how; they were all dumb with astonishment how they had lost Polmood; or how they came to travel so far without missing him; but he was at last discovered, nigh to the rear, sitting silently on his horse, dressed in an old slouch hat, which had lately been cast by one of the grooms. His horse was a good one, his other raiment was costly and elegant, and the ludicrous contrast which the old slouch hat formed to these, with the cir-

cumstance of the wearer being a bridegroom, and just going to be married to the most beautiful, elegant, and fashionable lady in the kingdom, altogether struck every one so forcibly, that the whole company burst out in an involuntary shout of laughter. Polmood kept his position without moving a muscle, which added greatly to the humour of the scene. The king, who never till that moment recollected his having hid Polmood's bonnet, was so much tickled, that he was forced to alight from his horse, sit down upon a stone, hold his sides, and laugh.

"What, Polmood!" said he, when he recovered breath to speak. "What, Polmood! do you prefer that couth'e to your own elegant bonnet?"

"No, sire," said Polmood, "but I preferred it to a bare head; for when ready to mount, I found that I had mislaid my bonnet, or lost it some way, I do not know how."

"I have been somewhat to blame in this Polmood, but no matter; you cannot and shall not appear at your own nuptials in such a cap as that; therefore let us change for a day—no excuses; I insist on it." Polmood then put on his royal master's bonnet, which was beset with plumes, gold, and diamonds. That new honour made him blush deeply, but at the same time he bluntly remarked, that his majesty was the greatest wag in all his dominions. The humour of the party was greatly heightened when they beheld James the fourth of that name, the greatest and the best of all the Stuart line, riding at the head of his nobles, and by the side of his queen, with the old greasy slouched hat on his head. They were mightily diverted, as well as delighted, with the good humour of their sovereign, and his easy condescension.

In a short time they reached the virgin's chapel, where they were met by the prior, and two monks of St Mary's, dressed in their robes of office. There Polmood was married to the lovely Elizabeth Maners, by the abbot of Inchaferrie, chaplain to

the king. The king himself gave her in marriage, and during the ceremony Polmood seemed deeply affected, but the fair bride was studious only how to demean herself with proper ease and dignity, which she effected to the admiration of all present. Her beauty was so transcendent, that even the holy brothers were struck with astonishment; and the abbot, in the performance of his office, prayed fervently, as with a prophetic spirit, that that beauty which, as he expressed it, "outvied the dawn of the morning, and dazzled the beholders, might never prove a source of uneasiness, either to her husband or her own breast. May that lovely bloom," said he, "long dwell on the face that now so well becomes it, and blossom again and again in many a future stem. May it never be regarded by the present possessor as a cause of exultation, or self-esteem; but only as a transient engaging varnish, over the more precious beauties of the mind; and may her personal and mental charms be so blended, that her husband may never perceive the decay of the one, save only by the growing beauties of the other." The tear rolled in Polmood's eye. Elizabeth was only intent on the manner in which she stood, and on ordering her downcast looks and blushes aright; she thought not of the petition, but of the compliment paid to her beauty.

Soon were they again on horseback, and ascending the high hill of Falgeat, they dined on its summit, by the side of a crystal spring. From that elevated spot they had an immense and varied prospect, which, on all hands, was intercepted only by the blue haze, in which distance always screens herself from human vision. The whole southern part of the kingdom from sea to sea, lay spread around them as on a map, or rather like one half of a terrestrial globe,—

Where oceans rolled and rivers ran,
To bound the aims of sinful man.

Man never looked on scene so fair
As Scotland from the ambient air ;
O'er valleys clouds of vapour rolled,
While others beamed in burning gold ;
And, stretching far and wide between,
Were fading shades of fairy green.
The glossy sea that round her quakes ;
Her thousand isles, and thousand lakes ;
Her mountains frowning o'er the main ;
Her waving fields of golden grain !
On such a scene, so sweet, so mild,
The radiant sun-beam never smiled !

But though the vales and frith of Lothian lay stretched like a variegated carpet below his feet on the one side, while the green hills and waving woods of Ettrick Forest formed a contrast so noble on the other, it was remarked, that the king fixed his eyes constantly on the fells of Cheviot, and the eastern borders of England. Did he even then meditate an invasion of that country ? or did some invisible power, presiding over the mysteries of elicitation and sympathy, draw his eyes and cogitations irresistibly away to that very spot where his royal and goodly form was so soon to lie in an untimely grave ?

Towards the evening, in endeavouring to avoid a morass, the whole party lost their way ; and the king, perceiving a young man at a little distance, rode briskly up to him in order to make inquiries. The lad, who was the son of a farmer, and herding his father's sheep, seeing a cavalier with a slouched hat galloping towards him, judged him to be one of a troop of foragers, and throwing away his plaid and brogues, he took to his heels, and fled with precipitation.

It was in vain that the king shouted and called on him to halt ; he only fled the faster ; and James, who delighted in a frolic, and was under the necessity of having some information concerning the way, seeing no better would, he drew his sword, and pursued him full speed. As the youth ran to-

wards the steepest part of the hill, the king, who soon lost sight of his company, found it no easy matter to come up with him. But at last the hardy mountaineer, perceiving his pursuer hard upon him, and judging that it was all over with him, faced about—heaved his baton, and prepared for a desperate defence.

Whether the king rode briskly up in order to disarm him at once; or whether, as he pretended, he could not manage to stop his horse on the steep, could not be determined, owing to the difference of the relation, when told by the king and the shepherd; but certain it is, that at the first stroke the shepherd stunned the king's Spanish bay, who foundered on the heath, and threw his rider forward among the feet of his antagonist. The shepherd, who deemed himself fighting for life and salvation, plied his blows so thick upon the king's back and shoulders, that, if the former had not previously been quite exhausted by running, he had certainly maimed the king. But James, feeling by experience, that there was no time to parley, sprung upon his assailant, whom he easily overthrew and disarmed, as being completely out of breath. "What does the fool mean?" said the king. "All that I wanted of you, was to put us on our way to Peebles, for we have entirely lost both our path and our aim."

"But you must first tell me who you are," said the youth; "I fear you have no good design on Peebles."

"We are a wedding party going there to make merry. The king and queen are to meet us, and honour us with their company; and if you will go along and direct us the way, you too shall be our guest, and you shall see the king and all his court."

"I can see plenty o' fools without ganging sae far," said the shepherd. "I account that nae great favour; I have often seen the king."

"And would know him perfectly well, I suppose?"

“ Oh, yes. I could ken him amang a thousand. But tell me, are you indeed Scotsmen ?”

“ Indeed we are, did you not see many ladies in company ?”

“ I am sorry for putting you to sae muckle trouble, sir ; but wha the devil ever saw a Scot wear a bonnet like that !”

“ Come, mount behind me, and direct us on our way, which seems terribly intricate, and you shall be well rewarded.”

The youth mounted, bare legged as he was, behind the stalwart groom, without farther hesitation—they soon came in sight of the company, who were waiting the issue of the pursuit—the king waved his slouched hat, and called on them to follow, and then rode away at a distance before, conversing with his ragged guide. The eminence where the party dined, is called the *King's Seat* ; and the glen where they found the shepherd, the *Weddingers Hope* to this day.

CHAP. XII.

THE road which they were now obliged to follow was indeed intricate ; it winded among the brakes and woods of Grevington in such a manner, that, if it had not been for the shepherd, the royal party could not have found their way to the town of Peebles or the castle of Nidpath that night. James and the shepherd led the way, the latter being well acquainted with it ; and all the rest followed in a string as they could win *their* way. The two foremost being both on the same horse, conversed freely as they went. There being

a considerable difference in the relation which the parties gave of the particulars of this conversation, the real truth could not be fully ascertained; but the following is as near a part of it as could be recovered.

• *King*.—"So you know the king well enough by sight, you say?"

Shep. "Perfectly well."

"Pray what is he like?"

"A black looking thief-like chap, about your ain size, and somewhat like you, but a great deal uglier."

"I should like of all things to see him and hear him speak."

"You would like to see him and hear him speak, would you? Well, if you chance to see him, I will answer for it, you shall soon hear him speak; There's naething in the hale world he delytes sae muckle in, as to *hear himself* speak—if you are near him, it will gang hard if you hear ony thing else; and if you do not *see* him, it will not be his fault; for he takes every opportunity of showing his *goodly person*."

"So you have no great opinion of your king I perceive."

"I have a *great opinion* that he is a silly fellow; a bad man at heart; and a great rascal."

"I am sorry to hear that, from one who knows him so well, for I have heard, on the contrary, that he is accounted generous, brave, and virtuous."

"Aye, but his generosity is a' ostentation—his bravery has never yet been weel tried; and for his virtue—God mend it."

"Well, shepherd, you know we may here speak the sentiments of our hearts freely, and whatever you say——"

"Whatever I say! I have said nothing which I would not repeat if the king were standing beside me—I only said his courage has not yet been tried—I say sae still—And I said, for his virtue, God mend it. Was that wrong? I say sae still too—I would say as muckle for any person; of you, or

even my own father. The truth is, I like James Stuart weel enough as my king, and would fight for him to my last breath against the Englishmen ; but I am unco angry at him for a' that, and would as willingly fight wi' him. If I had got him amang my feet as I had you lately, mercy ! how I would have laid on !"

"The devil you would?"

"That I would ! But by the by, what makes you wear an iron chain ? you have not killed your father too, have you ? Or is it only for the purpose of carrying your master's wallet."

"No more ; only for carrying my master's wallet."

"Aye, but the king wears ane sax times as big as that of yours man—Was not that a terrible business ? How can we expect any blessing or good fortune to attend a king who de-throned and murdered his father ? for ye ken it was the same thing as if he had done it wi' his ain hand."

"It is well known that his father was much to blame ; and I believe the king was innocent of that, and is besides very sorry for it."

"Though he was to blame, he was still his father—There's nae argument can gang against that ; and as to his being sorry, it is easy for him to say sae, and wear a bit chain over his shoulder, as you do : but I firmly believe, if the same temptation, and the same opportunity, were again to recur, he would do the same over again. And then, what a wicked man he is with women ! He has a very good queen of his ain, even though she be an Englishwoman, which is certainly wonderful ; yet, she is a very good queen ; yet, he is so indifferent about her, that he is barely civil, and delights only in a witching minx, that they ca' Grey—Grey by name and Grey by nature I wad reckon. What a terrible sin and shame it is to gallaunt as they do ! I wonder they two never think of hell and purgatory."

"We must allow our king a little liberty in that way."

Yes; and then he must allow it in others, and they in others again—you little think, what a wicked prince has to answer for."

"Are such things indeed reported of the king?"

"Aye, and in every body's mouth. Fy! fy! what a shame it is! If I were in his place I would "shu the Heron away," the auld song says—Pray did you never hear the song of the *Heron* which one of our shepherd's made, a strange chap he is?"

"Never."

"Well, it is the sweetest thing you ever heard, and I will sing it to you when I have time. I would give the best wedder in my father's flock that King James heard it; I am sure he would love our old shepherd, who well deserves his love, for there is no man in Scotland that loves his king and nation so well as he. But to return to our king's faults, the worst of the whole is his negligence in looking after the rights and interests of the common people. It is allowed on all hands, that James is a good-natured and merciful prince; yet, the acts of cruelty and injustice, which every petty lord and laird exercises in his own domain, is beyond all sufferance. If his majesty knew but even the half that I know, he would no more enjoy his humours and pleasures so freely, till once he had rectified those abuses, which it has always been the chief study of his nobles to conceal from his sight. I could show him some scenes that would convince him what sort of a king he is."

The shepherd, about this time, observing that one of the troop behind them continued to sound a bugle at equal intervals, with a certain peculiar lilt, asked the king what the fellow meant. The king answered, "That he was only warning Mess John and the weddingers, to be ready to receive them. And you will soon see them," continued he, "coming to meet us, and to conduct us into the town." "And will the king indeed be there?" "Yes, the king will indeed be

there?" "Well, I wish I had my hose, brogues, and Sunday clothes on; but, it is all one, nobody will mind me."

Now it so happened, that James had, a short time previous to that, conferred a grant of the lands of Caidmoor on the town of Peebles, on account of their great attachment and good will towards him; and the news of his approach having been brought there by some of the servants, who had been despatched to provide accommodations at Nidpath, the townsmen had dressed themselves in their best robes, and were all prepared to receive their royal benefactor with every demonstration of joy; and, on hearing the well-known sound of his bugle, they repaired to meet him on a moor south of the river. The king being still foremost, rode up into the midst of his loyal burgesses without being discovered, and indeed without being regarded or looked at; then, wheeling about his horse, he made a halt until his train came up; the barelegged youth was still riding at his back on the same horse.

The shepherd could perceive no king, nor any thing like one, save Polmood, on whom the eyes of the townsmen were likewise fixed as he approached; yet they could not help thinking their king was transformed.

The courtiers with their attendants soon came up, and after arranging themselves in two rows before the king and the queen, who had now drawn up her horse close by his side, they uncovered their heads, and all bowed themselves at once. The shepherd likewise uncovered his head, without knowing to whom, but he understood some great affair to be going on. "For God sake! neighbour, tak aff that ugly slouched hat of yours, man," said he to his companion; and at the same time pushing it off with one of his arms. The king caught it between his hands as it fell. "To whom should I take it off, sirrah?—to you, I suppose," said he, and put it deliberately on again. This incident discovered his

majesty to all present, and a thousand shouts, mixed with a thousand bonnets, scaled the firmament at once.

The dreadful truth now glanced upon the shepherd's mind all at once, like the bolt of heaven that preludes a storm. The station which his companion held in the middle of the ring—the queen by his side—the heads uncovered, and the iron chain, all confirmed it.—He sprung from his seat, as the marten of the Grampians springs from his hold when he smells the fire—darted through an opening in the circle, and ran across the moor with inconceivable swiftness. “Hold that rascal,” cried the king, “lay hold of the villain, lay hold of him.” The shepherd was pursued by man, horse, and hound, and soon overtaken and secured. Their majesties entered the town amid shouts and acclamations of joy; but the unfortunate shepherd was brought up a prisoner in the rear by four officers of the king's guard, who were highly amused by the different passions that agitated his breast. At one time he was accusing himself bitterly, of folly and stupidity—at another, laughing at his mistake, and consoling himself after this manner: “Weel, the king will hang me the morn, there is nae doubt of it; but he canna do it for naething, as he does to mony ane, that is some comfort; by my faith, I gae him a hearty lounderin, he never gat sic dadds in his life—let him tak them.” Again, when he spoke or thought of his parents, his heart was like to burst. After locking him into the tol-booth of Peebles, they left him to darkness and despair; while all the rest were carousing and making merry, and many of them laughing at his calamity.

The king, whose curiosity had been aroused, made inquiries concerning the name, occupation, and qualities of this youth, and was informed; that his name was Moray (the same it is supposed with Murray); that he was a great scholar, but an idle, useless fellow; that the old abbot had learned him to sing, for which every one valued him, but that, unfortunate-

ly, he had likewise taught him the unprofitable arts of reading and writing, in which alone he delighted; and it was conjectured he would end in becoming a warlock, or studying the black art.

The king, though no profound scholar himself, knew well the value of education, and how to estimate it in others. He was, therefore, desirous of trying the youth a little further, and of being avenged on him for galling him in such a merciless manner, and sent a messenger to him that night, informing him, that he would be brought to the scaffold next day; but that if he had any message or letter to send to his father, the king would despatch a courier with it. The youth replied, that if the king would send a messenger with the letter who could read it to his father, he would certainly write one instantly; but that his father could not read. The messenger, knowing that the king was particularly desirous of seeing the writing and composition of a shepherd, and of comparing it with those of his clerks, promised that such a messenger should be sent with it. The shepherd wrote one without delay, which the man took, and carried straight to the king. This letter is likewise inserted in Mr Brown's book of ancient manuscripts, but it seems to have been written at a much later period than many others that are there; the spelling is somewhat more modern, and the ink scarcely so yellow. The following is a literal copy:—

Dr faythr im to be hangit the morn, for daddinge of the kingis hate; for miskaing him to his fes abynt his bak; for devering his whors, and layinge on him with ane grit stick. i hope el no be vext, for im no theefe; it was a sayir battil, an a bete him doune wis dran sorde; for i miskent him. if it hadna bin krystis merse, ad kild him. mi muthr l be vae, but ye men pleis her, an il be gled to se ye in at the dett. for i wonte er blissyng. im no feirit, but yit its ane asom thyng; its no deth it feirs me, but the eftir-kum garis my hert girle. if kryste an his muthr dinna do sumthin for me—

ther, i maye be ill——im er lukles sonne, Villem mora——
to Villem mora of kreuksten.

When this letter was read to the king and his courtiers ; instead of laughing at it, as might have been expected, they admired it, and wondered at the shepherd's profound erudition ; a proof that learning, in those days, was at a very low ebb in Scotland.

The messenger was despatched to his father ; and the old man and his wife, on receiving the news, repaired instantly to Peebles in the utmost consternation. They were however denied access to their son, until such time as he appeared on the scaffold. A great crowd was by that time assembled ; for besides the court, all the town people, and those of the country around, were gathered together to see poor William hanged. When his father and mother mounted the steps, he shook each of them by the hand, smiled, and seemed anxious to console them ; but they both turned about and wept, and their utterance was for some time quite overpowered. They had been given to understand, that the king would listen to no intercession ; for that their son had uttered sentences of a most dangerous and flagrant nature, in which they were likely to be involved, as having instilled such sentiments into his young mind. But when they learned from his own mouth, that he had committed the assault on the person of his majesty under a mistake ; and, knowing how justly their son had blamed his conduct and government, they could not help considering it extremely hard, to bring a valuable youth thus to a shameful and public execution for such an offence. The mother cried downright, and the old man with difficulty restrained himself. He did not fall at the king's feet, nor attempt speaking to him, as judging it altogether vain and unprofitable, but he turned on him a look that said more than any words could express ;

and then, as if hopeless of mercy or justice from that quarter, he turned them to Heaven—uncovered his gray head, and sinking on his knees, invoked the justice and forgiveness of the Almighty in strong and energetic terms. This was the language of nature and of the heart; and when he prayed, there was no cheek in the assembly dry, save those of the king and courtiers. “What hard hearts these great folks have,” said the country-people one to another.

The usual ceremonies being all got over, William’s face was at length covered—the executioner was just proceeding to do his duty—thousands of burgesses and plebeians were standing around with bare heads and open mouths, holding in their breath in awful suspense—the women had turned their backs to the scaffold, and were holding down their faces, and weeping—the parents of the youth had taken a long farewell of him, when the king sprung forward to the scene of action. “Hold!” said he, “this fellow, traitor as he is, has behaved himself throughout with some degree of spirit, and therefore he shall not die like a common felon—No,” continued he, unsheathing his sword, “he shall die by the hand of a king. Kneel down, William, I command you!” William, whose senses were all in confusion, and who felt the same kind of sensations as he sometimes wont to do in a dream, kneeled implicitly down on the boards, and held forward his head, making a long neck that his Majesty might get a fair blow at it. The king, either inadvertently or in a frolic, laid the cold blade of the sword for a moment upon his neck. William imagined his head was off, and fell lifeless upon the scaffold. The king then crossed him with his sword—“Rise up, Sir William Moray,” said he; “I here create you a knight, and give to you, and yours, the lands of Crookston and Newley, to hold of me for ever.” The old farmer and his wife uttered both an involuntary cry, between a sigh and a shout, it was something like that which a drowning person utters.

and they were instantly at the king's feet, clasping his knees. The crowd around hurled their caps into the air, and shouted until the hills rang again ; " Long live our gracious king !— long live our good king James !"

• When the tumult of joy had somewhat subsided, it was observed that William was lying still upon his face. They unbound his hands, and desired him to rise ; but he neither answered nor regarded ; and, on lifting him up, they saw with astonishment that he was dead in good earnest. His parents, in the utmost despair, carried him into a house, and for a long time every art to restore suspended animation proved fruitless. When the king laid the cold sword upon his bare neck, it was observed that he gave a violent shiver. The poor youth imagined that his head was then struck off, and to think of living longer in such circumstances was out of the question, so he died with all manner of decorum ; and it is believed he would never more have revived, if the most vigorous measures had not been resorted to. King James, who was well versed in every thing relating to the human frame, was the best surgeon, and the most skilful physician then in the realm, succeeded at last in restoring him to life. But even then, so strongly was his fancy impressed with the reality of his dissolution, that he could not be convinced that he was not in a world of spirits ; and that all who surrounded him were ghosts. When he came to understand his real situation, and was informed of the honours and lands conferred on him by the king, he wept out of gratitude, and sagely observed, that, "*after all, the truth told ay best.*"

CHAP. XIII.

WILLIAM, the shepherd, being now metamorphosed into Sir William Moray, was equipt in proper habiliments, and introduced at court by his new title. He often astonished the courtiers, and put them quite out of countenance, by his blunt and cutting remarks, and of course soon became a great favourite with James, who delighted in that species of entertainment, as all the Stuarts were known to do, but he more than any of them. No sooner had William arisen into favour, than he was on the very point, not only of losing it again, but of incurring the king's serious displeasure.

On the third or fourth evening after their arrival at Nidpath, when the feast and the dance were over, the king reminded William of the song which he had promised to sing to him on their way to Peebles. William hesitated, blushed, and tried to put it off; but, the more averse he seemed to comply, the more clamorous the company grew for his song.

This practice is too frequent even to this day, and it is one which neither betokens generosity nor good sense. It often puts an unoffending youth, or amiable young lady, to the blush, and lays them under the necessity of either making a fool of themselves, or of refusing those whom they wish to oblige, and to appear prudish, when in fact nothing is farther from their hearts. The custom can never be productive of any good; and, in the instance above alluded to, it was the cause of much shame and dissatisfaction; for William, pressed as he was, and unable to hold longer out, began, and with a face glowing with shame, a palpitating heart, and a faltering tongue, sung the following old ballad.

The writer of this tale is particularly happy at having it in his power to present his readers with a genuine and original

copy of this celebrated ancient song, save that he cannot answer precisely for having read, or copied, it exactly. He refers them, however, to the original Manuscript in the possession of Mr J. Brown, now living in Richmond Street, the perusal of which they will find no easy matter. It has been quoted by different living authors, or compilers rather, from tradition, and quoted falsely; but the meaning of it, like that of many an ancient allegory, seems never to have been at all understood. It may not be improper here to mention, that the only account that can be obtained of these ancient MSS. is, that they belonged to the house of March, and were found in the castle of Dumlanrig.

THE HERONE.

A VERY ANCIENT SONG.

LEISHE the hunde on the tassilyt moore !

Grein growis the birke in the coome se mello !

Strewe the tyme in the greinwude bôuir ;

For the dewe fallis sweite in the mune-beim yello !

For owir gude kyngis to the grein-wude gene, &c.

And bonie quene Jeanye lyis hirre lene, &c.

Weil mot scho siche, for scho wetis weil,

He sleipis his lane in the foreste sheile !

Aleke ! and alu ! for ouir gude kyng !

He sleipis on the fogge, and drinkis the sprynge !

Ne lorde, æ erl, to be his gyde,

But ane bonnye pege to lye by his syde :

And, O ! that pegis weste is slim ;

And his ee wad garre the dey looke dim !

And, O ! his breiste is rounde and fayir ;

And the dymend lurkis in hys revin hayir,

Thæt curlis se sweetlyc aboune his brye,

And rounde hys nek of eivorye !

Yet he mene sleipe on a bedde of lynge,

Aleke ! and alu ! for ouir gude kyng !

Weile mot Quene Jeanye siche and mene,

For scho kennis he sleipis his leiva lane !

The kreukyt kraine cryis owir the flode,
 The capperkayle clukkis in the wode ;
 The swanne youtis lythelye ouir the lowe ;
 The bleiter harpis abune the flowe ;
 The cushey flutis amangis the firris ;
 And ay the murecokke biks and birris ;
 And ay the ouirwurde of ther sange,
 " What ailis ouir kynge, he lyis se lange."

Gae hunte the gouke ane uther myle,
 Its no the reid eed capperkayle ;
 Its ne the murekokke birris at morne,
 Nor yitte the deire withe hirre breakine horne ;
 Its nowthir the hunte, nor the murelan game,
 Hes brung ouir kynge se ferre fre heme ;
 The gloomyng gele, norre the danyng dewe,
 He is gene to hunte the *Herone* blue.

Ne burde withe hirre mucht evir compaire,
 Hirre nekke se tapper, se tall, and fayir !
 Hirre breiste se softe, and hirre ee se greye,
 Hes stouin ouir gude kyngis herte awaye :
 But in that nekke ther is ane linke,

And in that breiste ther is ane brier,
 And in that ee ther is ane blink,

Will penne the deidis of wae and weir.
 But the graffe shall gepe, and the korbe flee ;
 And the bourik ryse quhair ane kynge sulde bee.

The *Herone* flewe eist, the *Herone* flewe weste,
 The *Herone* flewe to the fayir foryste !
 And ther scho sawe ane gudelye bouir,
 Was all kledde ouir with the lille flour :
 And in that bouir ther was ane bedde,
 With silkine schecitis, and weile dunc spredde ;
 And in thilke bed ther laye ane knichte,
 Hos oundis did bleide beth day and nighte :
 And by the bedde-syde ther stude ane stene,
 And thereon sate ane leil maydene,
 Withe silvere nedil, and silkene threde,
 Stemmyng the oundis quhan they did blede.

The *Heronc* scho flappyt, the *Heronc* scho flewe,
 And scho skyrit at bogge quheryn scho grewe.
 By leke, or tarne, scho douchtna rest,
 Nor bygge on the klofte hirre dowye este;
 Scho culdnac see ane fytyng schedde,
 But the lille bouir and the silkene bedde!
 And aye scho pifyrit, and aye scho leerit,
 And the bonny May scho jaumphit and jecrit;
 And aye scho turnit hirre bosim fayir,
 And the knichte he luvit to see hirre there;
 For, O! hirre quhite and kumlyc breiste,
 Was softe as the dune of the sulanis neste!

But the maydene that wachit him nichte and daye,
 She shu'd and shu'd the *Heronc* awaye;
 Licil Virtue was that fayir maydis neme,
 And sayir scho gratte for the knichtis bleme!
 But the *Heronc* scho flappyt, and the *Heronc* scho flew,
 And scho dabbyt the fayir mayde blak and blewe;
 And scho pykkit the fleche fre hirre bonny breiste-bene;
 And scho dykkit oute hirre cleir blewe ene;
 Till the knichte he douchtna beirc to see
 The maydene that wonte his meide to bee!

Swith *Heronc*! swith *Heronc*! hyde yer heide,
 The Herringden haque will be yer deide!
 The boue is bente withe ane silkine stryng
 And the airrowe fledgit with ane heronis wyng.
 O! quhae will werde the wefoue day!
 O! quhae will shu the *Heronc* awaye!

Now the blak kokke mootis in his fluthir deipe;
 The rowntre rokis the reven to sleipe;
 The sei-mawe couris on his glittye stene,
 For its greine withe the dewe of the jaupying maine
 The egill maye gaspe in his yermite riven,
 Amiddys the mystis and the raynis of hevin;
 The swanne maye sleike hirre breiste of milke,
 But the *Heronc* sleipis in hirre bedde of silke.

The gude knichtis wyttc is fledde or feye,
 By pithe of wyrde and glamurye;
 For aye he kissit hirre bille se fayir,
 Tho' vennim of eskis and tedis wase there.

WINTER EVENING TALES.

He skyrit to trowe bethe dule and payne,
That his hertis blude shulde paye the kene ;
But the threidis fre ilka ound scho drewe,
And aye the reide blude runne anewe ;
The ether hes leyne in the lyonis laire,
And that blude shall flowe for evermaire.
Now, loose the hunde on the tassilit moore,
Grein growis the birke in the coome se mello !
And bedde withe rewe the greinwude bouir,
Quhan the dewe fallis softe in the mune-beime yello.

CHAP. XIV.

THE youth sung this ballad to a wild melody, that was quite ravishing, though it might be said that he chanted, rather than sung it ; but he had proceeded only a short way with the second sentence, which relates to the page, when Madam Grey began to look this way and that way ; and to talk flip-pantly, first to one person, then to another : but seeing that no one answered, or regarded her, and that all were attentive to the song, she rose hastily and retired. The king tipped the wink to William, and made sundry signs for him to desist ; but he either did not, or would not understand them, and went on. At length his majesty rose, and commanded, with a loud voice, that the song should be stopped, for that it was evidently offensive. “ I am astonished at your majesty,” said the queen, “ it is the sweetest and most inoffensive song I ever listened to. It is doubtless a moral allegory, to which the bard has been led by a reference to some ancient tale. I beseech your majesty, that our young friend may, at my request, be permitted to go on with it.” The queen pretended thus not to understand it, that she might have the pleasure of hearing it out, and of witnessing the triumph of truth, and

virtue, over a heart subject indeed to weaknesses and wanderings, but whose nature was kind, and whose principles leaned to the side of goodness. Indeed, she hoped that the sly allusions of the bard, and his mysterious predictions of some great impending evil, might finally recall her lord from his wanderings, and reunite his heart to her whose right it was. And, moreover, she did not wish that the courtiers should perceive the poet's aim, although that was too apparent to be easily mistaken.

James, who was a notable judge of the perceptions of others, knew, or at least shrewdly suspected, that the queen understood the song, even couched and warped as it was; but he could not, with a good grace, refuse her request; so he consented, and sat in sullen mood till the song was concluded, when he flung out of the saloon with precipitate steps.

It was several weeks before William was again admitted to the king's presence; but the queen gave him a diamond ring, and many rich presents; and having been informed by him, privately, who was the author of the song, she settled upon the old shepherd 100 merks a-year, which she paid out of the rents of her own dowry-lands.

The king, who was always prone to justice, upon due consideration, and taking a retrospect of all that had passed, became convinced that William wished him particularly well; and that the obstinacy he manifested with regard to the song, in persisting in it, and refusing to leave any part of it out, originated in his good-will, and the hopes he entertained of reclaiming his sovereign to virtue.

The result of those reflections was, that William was one day sent for to his majesty's closet, and admitted to a private conversation with him. The king, without once hinting at any former displeasure or misunderstanding, addressed him to the following purpose: "My worthy and ingenuous young friend, do not you remember, that on the first day of our ac-

quaintance, while on our way to Peebles, you hinted to me, that great injuries were frequently done to the common people under my government, by some of their chieftains and feudal barons? This information has preyed upon my heart ever since; for there is nothing that so much concerns me as the happiness of my people, and I am determined to see them righted. In the meantime, it is necessary that I should have some evidences of the truth of your statement, and for that purpose I have formed a resolution of taking a journey in disguise over a part of the realm, that I may be an eye-witness to the existing grievances of which you complain so bitterly. It is not the first time I have made such excursions, unknown to any of my courtiers; and though it appears that they entertained suspicions that I was otherwise, and worse employed, the consciousness of my own good intentions, and the singular adventures I met with, fully compensated me for their mistaken notions. You little know, Sir William, how the actions of sovereigns are wrested by the malicious and discontented; I am fully persuaded, that the wily insinuations thrown out in the old bard's song of the Heron, are founded on reports, which were then circulated." William would fain have asked him, if he had not a pretty page who travelled in his company; but he feared it would be presuming too much, and touching the king upon the sore heel; so he said nothing, but only looked him in the face, and the king went on. — "Now, as you seem concerned about the welfare of the commonalty, and are conversant in their manners and habits, I purpose to take you as my only attendant and travelling companion. We will visit the halls of the great and the cottages of the poor, and converse freely with all ranks of men, without being known. I have been puzzled in devising what character to assume; but, amongst them all, I am partial to that of a travelling bard, or minstrel." William assured his majesty, there was no character so suitable, as it would secure them a

welcome reception both with the rich and poor ; “ and I can touch the harp and sing,” said he ; “ your majesty sings delightfully, and plays the violin ; therefore no other disguise, unless we become fortune-tellers, will answer us so well ; and the latter we can assume occasionally as we find circumstances to accord.” He was delighted with the project ; promised all manner of diligence and secrecy, and extolled his sovereign’s ingenuity and concern about his people’s welfare.

It would be far too tedious to relate circumstantially all the feasts, revels, and tournaments, which prevailed at Peebles and Nidpath, during the stay of the royal party, and likewise at the castle of Polmood, where the festival and the hunt closed for that season ; suffice it, that they were numerous and splendid ; and while they continued, the vanity of Elizabeth was fully gratified ; for she was the admiration of all who beheld her, both high and low.

It may likewise be necessary to mention in this place, that Alexander, duke of Rosay, having joined the party shortly after their arrival at Nidpath, his attentions to Elizabeth were instantly renewed, and were indeed so marked, that they were obvious to the eyes of all the court. Rosay was a gallant and goodly young man, and full brother to the king ; and it was too apparent, that Elizabeth was highly pleased with his attentions and unbounded flattery ; and that she never seemed so happy as when he was by her side.

In all their walks and revels about the banks of the Tweed, Polmood was rather like an odd person—like something borrowed, on which no account was set, rather than he who gave the entertainment, and on whose account they were all met. When every lady had her lord or lover by her side, Elizabeth, instead of walking arm in arm with Polmood, as was most fitting, was always to be seen dangling and toying with Rosay. Well could Rosay flatter, and trifle, and talk a great deal about nothing—he could speak of jewels, rings, and laces,

their colour, polish, and degrees of value. Polmood cared for none of those things, and knew as little about them. He did not know one gem from another, nor could he distinguish a gold chain or ring from one that was only gilt! What company was he for Elizabeth, in a circle where every one was vying with another in jewels? To flattery he was an utter stranger; for never had one sentence savouring of that ingredient passed his lips; nor could he in any way testify his love or respect, save by his attention and good offices. Alas! what company was he for Elizabeth? Rosay was a connoisseur in music—he understood the theory so far, that he was able to converse on the subject—knew many of the quaint, borrowed phrases, even to *andante*, *grazioso*, and *affettuosa*! He hung over Elizabeth while she played and sung, expressing his raptures of delight in the most empassioned terms—sighed, shook his head, and laid both his hands upon his breast at each thrilling melody, and dying fall! Polmood loved a song that contained a tale—farther perceptions of music he had none! Alas! what company was he for Elizabeth? Man is always searching for happiness here below; but, blindfolded by passion, he runs headlong after the gilded shadow, until he either falls into a pit, or sticks so fast in the mire that he is unable to return. Polmood had got a wife, and with her he thought he had got all the world—all that mortal could wish for, or desire! So lovely! so accomplished! so amiable!—and so young! The first week of wedlock—the next—the honey-moon past over—and Polmood did not remember of once having had his heart cheered by a smile from his beloved Elizabeth. In the hall, in the bower, and in the rural excursion, every knight had his consort, or mistress hanging on his arm—sitting on his knee, or toying with him; but Polmood had nobody! He saw his jewel in the possession of another, and was obliged to take himself up with any solitary gentleman like himself, whom he could find, to talk with him

about hunting and archery; but even on these subjects his conversation wanted its usual spirit and fervour, and all the court remarked, *that Polmood was become an altered man.*

The season for rural sports drew to a close—the last great hunt was held that year in the forest of Meggat-dale—the tinkell was raised at two in the morning, all the way from Blackdody to Glengaber, and the Dollar-law—upwards of 400 men were gathered that day, to “drive the deer with hound and horn.” The circle of gatherers still came closer and closer, until at last some hundreds of deers and roes were surrounded on the green hill behind the castle of Crawmel, which is named the Hunter-hill to this day. Around the skirts of that, the archers were placed at equal distances, with seventy leash of hounds, and one hundred greyhounds. At one sound of the horn the whole dogs were loosed, and the noise, the hurry, and the bustle, was prodigious. Before mid-day sixty deers were brought in, twenty-four of whom were fine old stags, and the rest yearlings and does.

The royal party then dispersed. The queen retired to Holyrood-house, being constrained to remain in privacy for some time—the courtiers to their respective homes, and King James and William to put their scheme in execution. Elizabeth was left with her husband in his lonely and hereditary castle.

The journey of the king's, before mentioned, being so well authenticated, and as so many curious traditions relating to it are still extant in the several districts through which he travelled, I have been at some pains to collect these, and shall give them in another part of this work.

CHAP. XV.

THE manner in which Polmood and Elizabeth spent the winter is not generally known. In the remote and lonely castle of Polmood they lived by themselves, without any of the same degree near them, with whom they could associate. In such a scene, it may well be conceived, that Elizabeth rather dragged on existence than enjoyed it. The times were indeed wofully altered with her. Instead of the constant routine of pleasure and festivity in which she had moved at court, there was she placed, in a wilderness, among rocks and mountains, snows and impetuous torrents ; and instead of a crowd of gay flatterers, who were constantly testifying their admiration of her fine form, beautiful features, and elegant accomplishments, there was she left to flatterate beside a man who was three times her age, and to whose person she was perfectly indifferent, if not averse. Their manners and habits of life were totally dissimilar, and even in the structure of their minds no congeniality could be traced. She never behaved toward him in a rude or uncivil manner, though uniformly in a way that marked the sentiments of her heart, and therefore it was apparent to all the domestics, that their master enjoyed none of the comforts, delights, or privileges of the married state.

On parting with the queen at Nidpath, Elizabeth had promised to visit her at Holyrood-house during the winter ; and the hopes of this visit to the court, where she intended to prolong her stay as long as it was possible, kept up her spirits during the first months of her exile ; but this journey Polmood had previously resolved not to permit. He had got enough of courtiers for the present ; and he well knew, if he could not engage the affections of Elizabeth, when neither

roust, revel nor rival was nigh to attract her mind, he would never gain them by hurrying her again into the midst of licentiousness and dissipation. He perceived that, at the long run, he made rather an awkward figure among King James's voluptuous courtiers; nor could he maintain his consequence among them in any other scene save the mountain sports. He was deemed a most gallant knight among the savage inhabitants of the forest; but, in the polished circle of James's court, he was viewed as little better than a savage himself.

Elizabeth had long been making preparations for her intended journey, and about the close of December, she proposed that they should set out; but Polmood put it off from day to day, on one pretence or other, until the Christmas holidays arrived, when he was urged and entreated by Elizabeth, to accompany her to Edinburgh, or suffer her to go by herself. Though that was the first time Elizabeth had ever deigned to entreat him for any thing, he remained obstinate; and at last gave her a mild, but positive refusal. It was a death-blow to the hopes of Elizabeth—her heart sunk under it; and before the evening she retired to her chamber, which she kept for upwards of a fortnight, seldom rising out of her bed. Polmood testified the greatest uneasiness about her health; but sensible that her principal ailment was chagrin and disappointment, he continued firm to his purpose. When he went to see her, she seldom spoke to him; but when she did so, it was with every appearance of equanimity.

During the remainder of the winter she continued in a state of moping melancholy, and this was the season when her heart first became susceptible of tender impressions. When all gayety, hurry, and bustle, were removed far from her grasp, she began to experience those yearnings of the soul, which mutual endearments only can allay. The source of this feeling, Elizabeth had not philosophy sufficient to discover; but it

led her insensibly to bestow kindnesses, and to court them in return. She was one week attached to a bird with the most impatient fondness, the next to a tame young doe, and the next to a lamb, or a little spaniel: but from all these her misguided affections again reverted, untenanted and unsatisfied. If there had not been something in her husband's manners repulsive to her very nature, she must at that time have been won; for there is nothing in the world more natural, than two of different sexes, who are for the most part confined together, becoming attached to each other. When this cannot be effected even when desired, it argues a total dissimilarity between the parties in one respect or other. Two or three times did Elizabeth manifest a slight degree of attachment, if not of fondness for her husband; but whenever he began to return these by his homely endearments, her heart shrunk from a closer familiarity, with a feeling of disgust which seems to have been unconquerable. How unfortunate it was, that neither should have reflected on the probability of such a circumstance, until it was too late to retrieve it!

About the turn of the year, there came an idle fellow into that part of the country, who said that his name was Connel, and that he was a native of Galloway. He was constantly lounging about the servant's hall in the castle of Polmood, or in the adjacent cottages. Polmood, having frequently met and conversed with this fellow, found that his answers and observations were always pertinent and sensible, and on that account was induced to take him into the family as his gardener; for Polmood was fond of gardening, and he had observed that Elizabeth seemed to take delight in the various flowers as they sprung.

The appearance of this fellow was whimsical beyond conception; he wore a coarse russet garb, and his red carrotty locks hung over his ears and face in a manner that was rather frightful. His beard had a yellowish tint, corresponding

with the colour of his hair, both of which seemed unnatural, for his eye and his features were fine, and his form tall and athletic, but he walked with a loutish stoop, that rendered his deportment altogether ludicrous. Elizabeth had often observed him, but she never took any further notice of him than to turn away with a smile.

One day, while sitting in her apartment alone, pensive, and melancholy, she cast her blue eyes around on the dark mountains of Herston—she saw the lambs racing on the gale, and the young deers peeping from the covert of the wood; but this view had no charms for her. The casement was open, and Connel the gardener was busy at work immediately before it—she sat down to her lute, and played one of her favourite and most mournful old airs, accompanying it with her voice. She had begun it merely to amuse herself, and scarcely thought of what she did, till she was surprised at seeing Connel give over working, and lean forward upon his spade, in the attitude of listening attentively. But how much more was she astonished, on perceiving, that when she ceased, he wiped a tear from his eye—turned round, and strode with a hurried pace to the angle of the walk, and then turned and fell again to his work; all the while appearing as if he knew not what he was doing. There is no motive works so powerfully upon the female mind, as the desire of giving delight to others, and thereby exciting their admiration. This marked attention of the humble gardener, encouraged Elizabeth to proceed—she sung and played several other airs with an animation of tone, which had never before been exerted within the walls of Polmood, and which raised her own languid spirits to a degree from which they had long been estranged.—Her curiosity was excited—she flung on a dress that was rather elegant, and before the fall of the evening, went out to walk in the garden, resolved to have some conversation with this awkward but interesting gardener.

When she first entered the walk at a distance, Connel stole some earnest looks at her ; but when she approached nigher, he never once looked up, and continued to delve and break the clods with great assiduity. She accosted him in that easy familiar way, which those in power use toward their dependants—commended his skill in gardening, and his treatment of such and such plants—Connel delved away, and gathered the white roots, flinging them into a basket that stood beside him for the purpose, but opened not his mouth. At length she asked him a question, which he could not avoid answering. He answered it ; but without turning his face about, or looking up. When he ceased speaking, Elizabeth found herself in a deep reverie—her mind had wandered, and she felt as if striving to recollect something which her remembrance could not grasp. At considerable intervals she brought him to converse again and again ; and, as often did she experience the same sensations, these sensations had something painful as well as pleasing in them ; but the most curious thing that attended them was, that they were to her altogether unaccountable.

From that time forward the garden seemed to have become Elizabeth's home ; and Connel, the clownish but shrewd gardener, her only companion.—She played and sung every day at her window to delight him, and ceased only on purpose that she might descend into the garden to hear him converse, and commend the works of his hands. She was indeed drawn toward him by an irresistible impulse, that sometimes startled her on reflection ; but her heart told her that her motives were not questionable.—Love she was sure it could not be ; but whatever it was, she began to experience a faint ray of happiness. Polmood perceived it, and was delighted ; while Connel the gardener, on account of his inestimable art, in administering pleasure to a desponding beauty, shared of his master's esteem and bounty.

Things passed on in this manner, or with little variety, until the end of summer. On the 14th of August, a guest arrived at the castle of Polmood unexpectedly, and not altogether welcome—welcome indeed to Elizabeth, but not so to her husband, who heard him announced with the most galling vexation.—This was no other than Alexander, duke of Rosay, with his suit, who announced the king's intention of being there by the end of the next week. Elizabeth was literally frantic with joy; she scarcely knew either what she was doing or saying, when Rosay alighted in the court, and saluted her with his own and royal brother's kindest respects. Polmood received the duke as became his high dignity, and his own obligations to the royal family; but in his heart he wished him at the distance of a thousand miles. His discernment of human character was not exquisite, but he foresaw a part of what was likely to ensue, and the precognition foreboded nothing good to any one. He felt so much chagrined at the very first rencounter, that he found he could not behave himself with any degree of propriety; and the consequence was, that Rosay and Elizabeth were soon left by themselves. Her complexion had become a little languid; but the sudden flow of spirits which she experienced, lent a flush to her cheek, a fire to her eye, and rapid ease and grace to her manner, which were altogether bewitching.

Rosay was a professed libertine, and of course one of those who felt little pleasure in aught, save self-gratification; but he had never in his life been so transported with delight, as he was at beholding Elizabeth's improved charms, and seeming fondness of him; for so he interpreted the feelings of her heart, which gave birth to this charming vivacity—these, however, had their origin from a source quite different from that which he supposed.

As soon as they were left alone, in the first transports of his passion he caught her in his arms, and kissed her hand

again and again. She chided him—she ~~was~~ indeed angry with him—but what could she do? Situated as they were, she could not come to a professed and open rupture, on account of any little imprudencies which his passionate admiration had induced him inadvertently to commit; so all was soon forgot and forgiven. But whatever freedoms a man has, once taken with one of the other sex, he deems himself at liberty to venture on again whenever occasion serves. A lady ought by all means to be on her guard against a lover's first innovations—the smallest deviation from the path of rectitude is fraught with incalculable danger to her—one imprudence, however slight she may deem it, naturally, and almost invariably, leads to a greater; and when once the tale is begun, there is no mathematical rule by which the final sum may be computed, even though the aggressor should advance in the most imperceptible gradation. The maiden that ventures, in any way, to dally with a known libertine in morals, ventures to play around the hole of the asp, and to lay her hand on the snout of the lion.

The reader must by this time be so well acquainted with the character of Elizabeth, as to perceive, that in this fondness displayed for Rosay, there was no criminality of intention—not a motion of her soul that cherished the idea of guilty love—nor a thought of the heart that such a thing was intended on his part.—A thirst for admiration was what had hitherto chiefly ruled all her actions—that passion was now, for a season, likely to be fully gratified in the court circle, whose hostess she would be; and, considering the wearisome season she had passed, was it any wonder that she felt happy at seeing the polished Rosay again, or that his adulations and amorous enticements should, from their novelty, be grateful to her volatile heart?

Polmood viewed the matter in a very different light, and in the worst light which it was possible for a husband to view

it. He had long had some faint unformed apprehensions of Elizabeth having been the duke's mistress previous to his marriage with her, and thought it was owing to that circumstance, that the king had got the marriage put suddenly over in the absence of Rosay, and had given him so large a dowry with her. It is easy to conceive how galling such an idea must have been to his proud but honest heart. Their behaviour at Nidpath, immediately after the wedding, first engendered these injurious ideas, and this visit of Rosay's went far to confirm them. That the king and his nobles should come into the forest for a few weeks, to enjoy the hunt, without any other sinister motive, was natural enough; but why, or for what purpose, Rosay should have come a fortnight earlier, he could not divine. Perhaps these suspicions were not without foundation, so far as they regarded Rosay; but they were quite groundless with regard to Elizabeth; yet every part of her conduct and behaviour, tended to justify the ungracious surmise. Polmood had felt, with silent regret, her marked coldness and disaffection; but when he saw those smiles and caresses, which he languished for in vain, bestowed so lavishly upon a gay and flippant courtier, his patience was exhausted, and from the hour of Rosay's arrival, the whole frame and disposition of his mind was altered. The seeds of jealousy, which had been early sown in his bosom, had now taken fast root—his vigilance was on the alert to ascertain the dreadful truth, and every pang that shook his frame, whispered to his soul the most deadly revenge on the destroyers of his peace. His conversation and manners were, at best, not very refined; but the mood and temper of mind in which he then was, added to his natural roughness a degree of asperity that was hardly bearable. Polmood's company was of course little courted by Rosay and Elizabeth—he discovered this, and set himself only to keep a strict watch over all their motions, and that with every degree of cunning and diligence

that he was master of. They were always together; they toyled, they sung, convversed in the arbour, walked into the wood, and sat by the side of the river. In some of their excursions, Polmood could not follow them with his eyes without being seen by them, and therefore desired Connel the gardener to keep a strict watch over their conduct. He needed not have given him this charge; for Connel was more anxious on the watch than Polmood himself: he perceived the snare into which his young mistress was likely to be led, and trembled to think of the consequences. When they sat in the arbour, he contrived to work at something or other, directly in front of it; when they walked, or sat by the side of the river, he was angling there for fish to the table; and when they retired into the wood, Connel the gardener was there, cutting off twigs to make baskets, or birches wherewith to dress his garden. He resolved to watch them at all events, and haunted them like their evil genius. Rosay often cursed him; but ~~he~~ ^{both} seemed always very glad to see him, and took every occasion of conversing with him, as she and her gay gallant passed. If Connel ever perceived any improprieties in their conduct, he concealed them; for his report to his master was always highly favourable, as far as they regarded Elizabeth; but he once or twice ventured to remark, that he did not consider Rosay a character eminently calculated to improve the morals of any young lady. Polmood bit his lip and continued silent—he was precisely of the same opinion, but could think of no possible expedient by which they might be separated. His jealousy had increased his ingenuity; for he had devised means by which he could watch all their motions in the hall, the parlour, and the arbour, without being seen. This was rather an undue advantage, for who would wish to have all their motions and actions subjected to such a scrutiny.

The time of the king's arrival approached, and Polmood,

with all his vigilance, had not hitherto discovered any thing criminal in their intercourse. He had, however, witnessed some familiarities and freedoms, on the part of Rosay in particular, which, if they did not prove, still led him shrewdly to suspect the worst. But now a new and most unexpected discovery was effected, which enkindled the ignitable pile of jealousy into the most furious and fatal flame.

CHAP. XVI.

FROM the time that Rosay arrived, poor Connel the gardener seemed to labour under some grievous malady, and became thoughtful and absent. He took pleasure in nothing save herding his fair mistress and her spark; and it was evident to all the menials, that some great anxiety preyed upon his mind. Elizabeth, too, had observed this change in her humble but ingenuous dependant, and had several times inquired the cause, without being able to draw from him any definite answer.

One day Elizabeth had left for a while the delightful treat of flippancy, banter, and adulation, for the more sober one of holding a little rational conversation with Connel, and the following dialogue past between them: "I have long had a desire to hear your history, Connel. You once told me that your parents were in good circumstances; why, then, did you leave them?" "It was love that occasioned it, madam." This answer threw Elizabeth into a fit of laughter; for the ludicrous idea of his having run away from the object of his affection, together with the appearance of the man, combined in presenting to her mind an image altogether irresistible.

“ So you really have been seriously in love, Connel ? ” “ Yes, madam, and still am so seriously in love, that I am firmly convinced no living man ever loved so well, or with such unalterable devotion, as I do. Pray, were you ever in love, if it please you, madam ? ” “ A pretty question that, considering the state in which you find me placed.” Connel shook his head. “ But if you, who are a lover, will describe to me what it is to be in love, I may then be able to answer your question with certainty.” “ Between two young people of similar dispositions, it is the most delightful of all sensations ; all the other generous feelings of the soul are not once to be compared with it—Please, dear madam, did you never see any man of your own age whom you could have loved ? ” Elizabeth appeared pensive—her mind naturally turned upon the young Baron Carmichael. In her wearisome days and nights she had often thought of him, and of what she might have enjoyed in his company ; for, though Elizabeth had little or no foresight, but as, for the most part, on the impulse of the moment, or as contingent circumstances influenced her, she had nevertheless a clear and distinct memory, and was capable of deep regret. She made no answer to Connel’s query, but at length accosted him as follows : “ I should like to hear the history of your own love, Connel ; that is the chief point at which I aim.” “ Alas ! it is nearly a blank, my dear lady. I love the most sweet, the most lovely creature of her sex ; but fate has so ordered it, that she can never be mine.” “ If you love her so dearly, and she return that love, one would think you might hold fate at defiance.” “ She did affect me, and, I am convinced, would soon have been won to have loved me with all her heart ; but that heart was inexperienced—it was over-ruled by power, and swayed by false argument ; and before ever she got leisure to weigh circumstances aright, she was bestowed upon another.” “ And do you still love her even when she is the wife of another

man?" "Yes, madam, and more dearly than I ever loved her before. I take no delight in any thing with which she is not connected. I love to see her—to hear her speak; and, O! could I but contribute to her happiness, there is nothing on earth that I would not submit to." "Now, you tell me what is impossible; such pure disinterested love does not exist between the sexes as that you pretend to." "Indeed, but it does, madam." "I cannot believe it." "Yes, you will soon believe it; and I can easily convince you of that." On saying this, he loosed a small tie that was behind his neck, and pulling his red beard and wig over his head, there stood Connel, the clownish gardener, transformed into the noble, the accomplished, young Baron Carmichael.

Elizabeth was singular for her cool unmoved temper and presence of mind; but in this instance, she was overcome with astonishment, and for about the space of two minutes, never was statue cast in a mould so striking. Her fine form leaned forward upon the air in a declining posture like an angel about to take leave of the dwellings of men—her hands upraised, and her eyes fixed upon her lover, who had sunk on his knees at her feet—from him they were raised slowly and gradually up to heaven, while a smile of astonishment played upon her countenance that quite surpassed all description—"Carmichael!" exclaimed she, "Good God of Heaven! is it possible!" He attempted to speak and explain his motives, but she interrupted him: "Make haste and resume your impenetrable mask," said she; "for if you are discovered, we are both undone." So saying, she hurried away from him, agitated in such a manner as she had never been before. She posted from one part of the castle to another, tried an hundred different postures and positions, and as often changed them again. She tried to ponder, but she was not used to it—she could reflect on what was past with a hurried restless survey, but no scheme or mode of procedure could she fix on

for the future. It was, upon the whole, a sweet morsel ; but it was mixed with an intoxicating and pungent ingredient. The adventure had something pleasingly romantic in it ; yet she feared—she trembled for some consequence—but did not now what it was that she feared.

In this mood she continued about two hours, shifting from place to place—rising, and as hastily sitting down again, till at last she sunk upon a couch quite exhausted, where she fell into a profound sleep. She had, all this while of restlessness, been endeavouring to form a resolution of banishing Carmichael instantly from her presence, but had not been able to effect it.

There is nothing on which the propriety and justice of any action so much depends, as the temper of mind in which the resolver to do it is framed. And there is, perhaps, no general rule more unexceptionable than this, that when a woman awakens out of a sound and guiltless sleep, her heart is prone to kindness and indulgence. The lover, who had before grieved and wronged her, she will then forgive, and shed a tear at the remembrance of former kindnesses. The child, that had but lately teased and fretted her almost past endurance, she will then hug with the fondest endearment ; and even if an inferior animal chance to be nigh, it will then share of her kindness and caresses.

In such a soft and tender mood as this was Elizabeth's resolution formed with regard to her behaviour towards Carmichael. She had dreamed of him in her late sleep, and her fancy had painted him all that was noble, kind, and generous in man—every reflection in which she indulged, terminated favourably for Carmichael—every query that she put to her own mind, was resolved upon the most generous principles, and answered accordingly. The consequence of all this was, that, long before evening, she was again in the garden, and spent at

least an hour in the company of the enamoured and delighted gardener.

From that hour forth was Elizabeth estranged from Rosay; for the delineation of his character now formed a principal theme of conversation between her and Carmichael. It was on purpose to prevent her, if possible, from falling into Rosay's snare, that Carmichael had at that time discovered himself; for he saw that her condition and state of mind peculiarly subjected her to danger, if not to utter ruin. Rosay being now deprived of his lovely companion all at once, was left by himself to reflect on the cause, and Polmood and he were frequently left together, although they were not the most social companions in the world. Elizabeth had flowers to examine—she had berries to pull—she had arbours to weave—and, in short, she had occasion to be always in the garden. Polmood perceived this change, and was glad, while Rosay was chagrined beyond measure.

What this sudden and complete change in Elizabeth's behaviour proceeded from, Rosay was utterly at a loss to guess—nor knew he on whom to fix the imputation. Her husband it could not be, for she was less in Polmood's company than in his own. He could not be jealous of the comical red-headed gardener; but he shrewdly suspected, that it was owing to some insinuation of his, that he was thus baulked in his amour, when he conceived the victory as certain as if it had been already won.

Jealousy has many eyes, and is ever on the watch—Rosay learned one day that Elizabeth and her gardener, who were seldom asunder, were to be employed in gathering wood-rasps for a delicate preserve, which she was busied in preparing; and having observed a brake near the castle, where these berries were peculiarly abundant, he was assured they would seek that spot; so he went previously and hid himself in the heart of a bush, in the middle of the thicket, where he heard, without being observed or suspected, a full half hour's conver-

sation between the lovers. He heard his own character very freely treated, and besides, discovered the whole secret ; at least he discovered, that Connel, the gardener, was no other than Elizabeth's former lover, the banished Baron Carmichael. Chagrined at his utter disappointment, and full of revenge at hearing his character and motives painted in their true colours, he hastened to apprise Polmood of the circumstance.

When he arrived at the castle, Polmood was gone out ; but impatient of delay, and eager for sudden vengeance, he followed to seek him, that he might kindle in his breast a resistless flame, disregarding any other consequences than the hurt it was likely to bring upon his rival. It chanced that they took different directions, and did not meet, until they encountered each other on the green before the castle.

Elizabeth was then sitting at her lattice, and perceiving the unusual eagerness with which Rosay came up and accosted Polmood, she dreaded there was something in the wind. She observed them ~~strictly~~, and all their gestures tended to confirm it. After they had exchanged a few sentences, Rosay, as if for the sake of privacy, took his host by the hand, and led him to an inner-chamber.

The apartments of these old baronial castles were not ceiled up so close as chambers are now ; and, if one set himself to accomplish it, it was not difficult to over-hear any thing that passed in them.

Whether it was ~~fears~~ for her adventurous lover, the natural curiosity inherent in the sex, or an over-ruling providence, that prompted Elizabeth at that time to go and listen, it is needless here to discuss. Yet certainly she did go, and, with trembling limbs and a palpitating heart, heard the secret fully divulged to her husband, with many aggravations, ere it had been many days revealed to himself. Easily foreseeing what would be the immediate consequence, she, hastening back to the garden, warned Carmichael instantly to

make his escape, and mentioned a spot where he would find all the necessaries of life by night, provided he thought it safe to hide in the vicinity. Carmichael, expecting from this hint, that he might sometimes meet herself at that spot, without waiting to make any reply, took her advice—slipped into the wood, and continued his flight with all expedition, till he was out of danger of being overtaken. The spot which the baron chose for a hiding-place is well known, and is still pointed out by the shepherds and farmers of *the Muir*; for so that district is called. It is a little den near the top of Herston-hill, from which he could see all that passed about the castle of Polmood; where no one could approach him without being seen at the distance of half a mile, and if danger appeared on either side, he could retire into the other side of the hill with all deliberation, and without the smallest risk of being discovered. Here we will leave him to linger out the day, to weary for the night, and, when that arrived, to haunt the lanes and boortree-bush above Polmood, in hopes to meet his lovely misguided Elizabeth, and return to the scenes of violence and mystery at the castle of Polmood.

CHAP. XVII.

ROSAY had no sooner informed Polmood of the singular circumstance, that Connell the gardener was young Carmichael of Hyndford in disguise, than he formed resolutions of the most signal vengeance on the impostor, on Elizabeth, and on Rosay also. The truth of Rosay's statement he could not doubt, as a thousand things occurred to his mind in testimony of it; but he viewed this anxious and acrimonious act of di-

vulgement merely as the effect of jealousy and rivalry ; for with him no doubt remained but that Elizabeth was alike criminal with both. He had, both now and on a former occasion, witnessed her open dalliances with Rosay ; and when he considered how long he had been duped by her and another paramour, by his former inveterate rival in disguise, it could not be acknowledged, it was not without some reason that he now viewed his wife in the worst light in which it was possible any man could view a wife.

He pretended to treat Rosay's information with high contempt, but the emotions of his heart could not be concealed.—In a short time thereafter, he sallied forth into the garden with a frantic impatient mien, and having his sword drawn in his hand. What might have been the consequences cannot now be positively determined, but it was certainly fortunate for Connel, the gardener, that he was out of the way ; as the enraged baron sought every part where he was wont to be employed, and every lane where he used to stray, to no purpose ; but having no suspicion of his flight, he hoped to meet with him before the evening, and resolved to restrain his burning rage till then.

On that very evening King James and his nobles arrived at the castle of Polmood, with all their horses, hounds, hawks, and other hunting appurtenances. All was hurry, noise, bustle, and confusion. Polmood received his royal master with all the respect, kindness, and affability, which he was master of at the time ; but James, whose discernment of character was unequalled in that age, soon perceived the ferment of his mind.

Elizabeth did all that lay in her power to entertain her guests, and to render them comfortable ; and she succeeded to a certain degree. Polmood complained of severe illness—left the banquet again and again—walked about with his sword in his hand, watching for the base, the unprincipled

gardener, resolving to wreck the first effects of his fury on him ; but he was no where to be found, nor could any of the menials give the smallest account of him. Elizabeth's gayety and cheerfulness he viewed as the ebullitions of a mind callous to every sense of moral obligation and innate propriety ; like one who views a scene with a jaundiced eye, every thing appears with the same blemished tint ; so to his distempered fancy a crime was painted in every action of his unwary and careless spouse, however blameless that action might be.

He returned to the hall, sat down, drank several cups of wine in a kind of desperation, and, like a well-bred courtier, laughed at his majesty's jests as well as he could ; but he neither listened to them, nor regarded them for all that, because the fury of his heart grew more and more intolerable, and most of all, on learning the arrangements which were made in the castle for the lodging of their guests. These were such, as he deemed the most complete imaginable for preventing him from all command of, or watch over, his faithless spouse while the company remained, and such as appeared the most convenient in the world for an uninterrupted intercourse between her and Kosay. Jealousy reads every thing its own way, and so as to bear always upon one point ; although, as in the present instance, that way is generally the one farthest from truth.

Elizabeth never acted from any bad motive : her actions might be fraught with imprudence, for she acted always as nature and feeling directed, without considering farther of the matter. Thoughtless she certainly was, but a mind more chaste and unblemished did not exist. Her chamber was situated in the upper storey, and the best in the castle ; but (though with the utmost good humour) she had always declined passing a night in the same chamber with her husband, from the day after their marriage to the present moment, and at the present time she had given up her apartment for the accommodation of two of the royal family. Polmood, who did

not know of this circumstance, was appointed to sleep among twelve or fourteen others in temporary beds in the middle flat, and Elizabeth took up her lodging with her waiting-maids, on a flock bed on the ground floor.

Several of the nobles did not undress, of which number Polmood was one, who supposed Elizabeth to be in her own chamber, on the same flat with the king, Rosay, and others of the royal line. Strong as evidences had hitherto been against her, he had never been able to discover her in any very blamable situation; yet he had not the least doubt, but that she was that night sleeping in the arms of the Duke of Rosay. Every thing, he thought, seemed to be so-well devised for the accomplishment of this wished for and wicked purpose—whereas they were only so in the distempered brain of the jealous husband, who was now too visibly in a state of derangement.

Polmood could not sleep, but flounced, groaned, and wandered about like a troubled ghost. The more he pondered on recent discoveries and events, the more he became convinced of his disgrace, and judging that it was highly improper in him to suffer them longer to go on in their wickedness under his own roof, he resolved to be assured of it, and then cut them both off at a blow. He arose from his couch, on which he had lately thrown himself—left the apartment, telling those who were awake, that he was extremely ill, and was obliged to walk out—went straight to the chamber of Elizabeth—opened the door, and entered. The nobles, fatigued with their long journey and mellowed with wine, either did not hear the slight noise he made, or did not regard it, being all wrapped in a profound sleep. He soon discovered that there were two in the bed; that the one next him was a man, whom he judged to be Rosay, and he judged aright; and, in the first transport of rage, he would doubtless have run him through the body, if any weapon had been in his hand. He stood some minutes listening to their breathing, and soon began to sus-

pect, that the other, who breathed uncommonly strong, was not Elizabeth. Determined, however, to ascertain the truth, he put over his hand and felt his bearded chin. It was the Lord Hamilton, the constant companion of Rosay, and as great a rake as himself. On feeling Polmood's hand, he awoke; and thinking it was Rosay who had thrown his arm over him, he pushed it away, bidding him keep his paws nearer to himself, and be d—d to him; and at the same time gave him a hearty box or two with his elbow.

It unfortunately happened, that the amorous Rosay had, at that very moment, been dreaming of Elizabeth; for the first word that he pronounced on waking, was her name. Some, indeed, allege that Rosay was not asleep, and that he understood all that was going on; but that he was chagrined at the reception he had experienced from Polmood, and much more at being frustrated in all his designs upon Elizabeth; and that he studied revenge upon both. This is perhaps the most natural suggestion, for there is none so apt to brag of favours from the fair sex as those who have been disappointed. Be that as it may, when Lord Hamilton threw back Polmood's hand, and began, in jocular mood, to return the salute upon his companion's ribs, Rosay winced, pretending to awake, and said with a languid voice, "Elizabeth, what do you mean, my jewel? Be quiet, I tell you, Elizabeth." "What the d—l," said Hamilton, "is he thinking of? D—n the fellow, I suppose he thinks he is sleeping with Polmood's lady." It would be improper to relate all the conversation that passed between them; suffice it to say, that the confession which Rosay made was untrue, like that of every libertine. He said to Lord Hamilton, that he had but judged too rightly, and lamented he should have unfortunately discovered the amour in his sleep. O how fain Polmood would have wrested his soul from his body; but he commanded his rage, resolving to give him fair play for his life, and to kill him in open day, with

his sword in his hand, rather than in his bed. "Ah! how happy a man you are," said Hamilton; "but thy effrontery outgoes all comment; who else would have attempted the lovely and chaste Elizabeth?" "Not altogether so chaste, as you imagine," said Rosay; "besides her husband and myself, she has kept another paramour in disguise ever since her marriage." "The devil she has," returned Hamilton; "then I shall never trust to appearances in woman more."

Polmood groaned in spirit—but unable to contain himself longer, he, hastening down stairs, took down a sword from the armoury, and sallied out, in hopes of meeting the licentious gardener. The ferment of his mind was such, that he did not know what he was about. However, when he got into the fields and open air, he grew better; and roved about at will, uttering his moans and complaints to the trees and the winds, without disturbing any one but himself. But, what he little dreamed of, Carmichael overheard some of his lamentations and threatenings that very night.

The morning came, and the party mounted, and rode forth in high spirits to the hunt. From knowing the miserable night which Polmood had past, the generality of the company supposed that he would decline being of the party that day, but he made no such proposal; on the contrary, he was among the first that appeared, dressed in the uniform which all those who joined the royal party in the chase were obliged to wear—he had other schemes in contemplation than that of lingering and pining at home—schemes of vengeance and of blood. The king asked kindly for his health, and how he had past the night—he thanked his majesty, and said he had been but so so. The king bade him not be cast down; for that the ardour of the chase would soon restore him to his wonted health and cheerfulness. Polmood shook his head, and said, he feared it never would.

Early as it was when they departed, Elizabeth was up, and

stirring about, seeing that every one had what necessities he required. Every one seemed more anxious than another to compliment her, and pay her all manner of attention; while she, on her part, appeared to be exceedingly cheerful and happy. It was not so with Polmood: he was so thoughtful and absent, that when any one spoke to him, he neither heard nor regarded, and his hunting-cap was drawn over his eyes.—When his new liberated hounds fawned upon him, he struck them; and when his hawk perched upon his arm, he flung him again into the air.

The tinckell had been despatched the evening before to the heights around the forest of Frood. The place of rendezvous, to which the deers were to be driven, was a place called the Quarter-hill, somewhere in that neighbourhood, and thither the king and his lords repaired with all expedition. But the tinckell was then but thin, the country not having been sufficiently apprised of the king's arrival; the ground was unmanageable, and the deers shy, and the men found it impossible to circumscribe them. The consequence was, that when the dogs were let loose, it was found that there were not above a dozen of deers on the Quarter-hill. The king himself shot one fine stag as he was endeavouring to make his escape; other two were run down by the dogs at a place called Carterhope; and these were all the deers that were taken that day, at least all that were gotten. The greater number made their way by a steep rocky hill called the Ericle, where they left both the riders and the dogs far behind. But it being the first day of the chase that year, they were all in high mettle, and the hunt continued with unabated vigour—many new deers were started, which drew off the ardent hounds in every direction, and the chase at last terminated around the heights of a wild uncouth glen, called Gamesope. When the straggling parties came severally to these heights, they found that the

deers had taken shelter among rocks and precipices, from which it was not in their power to drive them.

Before they got the hounds called in, it was wearing towards the evening. They were, as I said, greatly scattered; so also were the men, who had followed the sound of the hounds and the echoes, until there scarcely remained above two of them together; and, to add to their confusion, a mist settled down upon the heights; and it was so close, that they could not see one another, even at the distance of a few yards. Long did they sound the bugles—long did they shout and whistle, endeavouring to assemble, but the confusion still grew the greater; and the issue ultimately was, that every one was obliged to find his way back to the castle of Polmood, in the best way he could, where they continued to arrive in twos and threes, until near midnight; others did not appear that night, and some never arrived again.

It was natural enough to suppose, that some of the knights, being strangers on those mountains, would wander in the fog and lose their way; but the company were somewhat startled, when it was reported to them a little before midnight, that Polmood's steed was come home without his master. This had rather a suspicious appearance; for of all men, it was the least likely that Polmood would lose his way, who knew every pass and ford in the forest as well as the walks in his own garden. Elizabeth appearing to be a little alarmed, some of the party went out to the stalls to ascertain the truth. What was their astonishment, when, on a close examination, they found that the steed was wounded with a sword; and, besides, that his bridle, mane, and saddle, were all bathed in blood—from the latter, it appeared that a slight effort seemed to have been made to clean it. When they bore this report into the hall, the company were all in the greatest consternation, and Elizabeth grew pale as death. The king trembled; for his sus-

picious fixed instantly on his brother, Rosay; yet, after watching him for some time with the greatest attention, he could discover not even the most distant symptoms of guilt in his looks or behaviour, as far as he could judge. The reports of individuals were greatly at variance with regard to the time and place where Polmood was last seen; so also were their proposals with regard to what was most proper to be done. At last, it was agreed to call a muster of all who had left the castle of Polmood in the morning, and who were expected there that night.

On taking the muster, it appeared that other four were wanting besides Polmood. These were—the Lord Hamilton, Lord James Douglas of Dalkeith, Sir Patrick Hepburn, and his friend the Laird of Lamington. Some of those, it was conjectured, might have lost their way; but that Polmood should have lost his there was no probability.

All remained in doubt and perplexity until the morning. When the morning came, a great number of people from all quarters arrived at the castle, in order to assist the king and his nobles in driving the deer; but he told them, that he meant to give his horses and hounds some rest, until he saw what had occasioned the present unaccountable defection; and, in the mean time, ordered that every house in the country adjacent, and every part of the forest, should be searched with all diligence, and every inquiry made concerning the knights who were missing; and, likewise, that the lieshmen should exert themselves in recovering their scattered hounds, many of whom were still missing.

All this was promptly obeyed, and parties of men were sent off in every direction. The two lords, Douglas and Hamilton, were soon found. They had completely lost their way in the mist the evening before, and were conducted by a shepherd to the castle of Hackshaw, on the border of the forest,

churlish and discourteous knight named Hugh Porteus ; but the others they had not seen, nor did they know any thing concerning them.

At length, after much searching to no purpose, one of the parties, in returning homeward, at the very narrowest and most impassable ford of Gamesope, found the bodies of two knights lying together ; but the heads were severed from them, and carried away, or so disposed of, that they could not be found. Both their swords were drawn, and one was grasped so firm in a cold bloody hand, that it could scarcely be forced from it ; and, from the appearance of the blood upon that sword, it was evident almost to a certainty, that some deadly wounds had been given with it.

All this was perfectly unaccountable ; and, as the uniform which the king's party wore was precisely the same on every one, even to the smallest item, they could not distinguish whose bodies they were which had been found ; and after they were borne to Polmood, and subjected to the most minute examination, there were not three present who could agree in opinion concerning them. The one, from the slenderness of the form, was judged to be that of Sir Patrick Hepburn ; but whether the other was the remains of Norman of Polmood, or Donald of Lamington, no one of the company could possibly determine. At length, when they had almost despaired of determining the matter absolutely, Polmood's page swore to the identity of his master's sword, and likewise his sandals, or hunting brogues, which ended all debates on the subject. The bodies were buried at Drumelzier, as those of Polmood and Sir Patrick Hepburn, and great mourning and lamentation was made for them by all ranks. The Laird of Lamington was blamed for the murder, and a high reward was offered by the king for his apprehension, but all was in vain ; he could never be either seen or heard of.

The more this mysterious business was discussed afterwards,

the more unaccountable and incredible it appeared. Hepburn and Lamington were known to be relations, his most intimate and loving friends, and no previous contention existed, nor was likely to exist between them; and as to Polmood, Lamington had never before seen him, so that no grudge or animosity could, with any degree of consistency, be supposed to have actuated either of them in such a bloody business, as to seek the life of the other.

In Rosay's heart, no doubt remained but that Carmichael was the perpetrator of this horrid deed; and he secretly rejoiced that it had so fallen out; for he had no doubt but that the sense of his guilt would cause him to abandon the country with all possible speed; and, if he dared to remain in it, his crime would eventually bring him to the block. In either of these cases, all obstruction to his own designs upon Elizabeth was removed. The gaining of her love was now an acquisition of some moment, as she was likely to inherit the extensive and valuable estate of Polmood, as well as her own dowry-lands.

Now that her husband was out of the way, no one living knew of Carmichael having lurked there so long disguised, save Rosay; therefore, in order that he might not affront Elizabeth, and thereby alienate her affections still the more, and, likewise, that the object of his intended conquest might still retain all her value and respectability in the eyes of the world, he judged it proper to keep that circumstance from being made public. But, that the king's vengeance might be pointed aright, and that Carmichael might not escape justice, if he dared to remain in the country, he disclosed the whole to his majesty in confidence.

James, on hearing the particulars of this singular adventure, likewise conceived Carmichael to be the assassin; yet still there was something remaining which required explanation. If Carmichael was the assassin, what had become of

the Laird of Lamington? On what account had he absented himself? or how was it that he could neither be found dead nor alive? There was still something inexplicable in this.

From the very first moment that the rumour of this fatal catastrophe reached the castle of Polmood, the suspicions of Elizabeth pointed to Carmichael, and to him alone. She knew he was still lurking in the neighbourhood, for the provisions and the wine, which she had left in the appointed den, had been regularly taken away; and she had likewise found a note there, written with the juice of berries, begging an interview with her, a request which she had even resolved to comply with; but the thoughts that he was a murderer now preyed upon her mind. The more the affair was developed, the more firmly was she convinced that he had slain her husband in hopes of enjoying her love; and she was shocked with horror at the idea.

She went to the den, which she knew he would visit if still in the country, and left a note below the stone to the following purport:

“Wretch! thou hast slain my husband, and I know it. Let me never see thy face again—fly this place, and for what thou hast done, may'st thou be pursued by the curses of Heaven, as thou shalt be by those of the wronged ——!”

She scarcely expected that he would get this letter; for, like Rosay, she imagined he would instantly flee the land; but on examining the spot next day she found that it was gone.

As soon as the funeral was over, the King withdrew with his suit from the castle, that Elizabeth might be suffered to spend the days appointed for mourning, in quietness and peace. But just as they were about to depart, Rosay besought of his royal brother to suffer him to stay and keep Elizabeth company for some time, representing to him, that Elizabeth had many important family concerns to look after,

for which she was but ill fitted, and would be much the better of one to assist her. The king did not thoroughly comprehend the nature of Rosay's designs upon Elizabeth; but he judged that her beauty, qualifications, and fortune, now entitled her to the best nobleman's hand in the realm. He was likewise himself an amorous and exceedingly gallant knight, and knew well enough, whatever the women might pretend, that their real joy and happiness were so much connected with the other sex, that without them, they need not be said to exist. On the ground of these considerations, he agreed at once to his brother's request, on condition that Elizabeth joined in it; but not otherwise.

Rosay sought out Elizabeth without delay, and represented to her, in as strong terms as he could, how lonely and frightsome it would be for her to be left by herself, in a place where such foul murders had lately been perpetrated, and where, as was reported, the ghost of the deceased had already been seen: That though it was incumbent on her to stay a while at the castle of Polmood, in order that she might put her late husband's affairs in such a posture, as to enable her to leave them, and live with her natural protectress, the queen, still there was no decorum nor etiquette forbade the retaining of a friend and protector, who had experience in those matters; That he begged of her to accept of his services for that purpose, and he would wait upon her with all due respect, during the time she remained at her castle, and afterwards conduct her to court, where she might be introduced, either as dame Elizabeth Hunter, or as Elizabeth dutchess of Rosay, whichever she had a mind to. Elizabeth did not at first much relish the proposal, but yet was unwilling to be left alone; and Carmichael having forfeited her esteem for ever, by the foulest of murders, she found that her heart was vacant of attachments, and she gave a ready, but

cold consent to Rosay's request, there being no other in the land whom, on consideration, she could choose in preference.

CHAP. XVIII.

ON the day that the king and his suit departed, there came an old palmer to the castle of Polmood, a monk of the order of Saint John of Jerusalem, who craved an asylum in the castle for a few days, with much singularity and abruptness of manner. It was well known, that the reign of James the IV. was not more singular for its gayety than its devotion, and that the court took the lead in the one as well as the other. Pilgrimages to the shrines of different saints were frequent, and all those in holy orders were revered and held in high estimation; therefore the request of the old monk was readily complied with, uncouth as his manner seemed; and a little dark chamber, with only one aperture, in the turret of the castle, was assigned to him for a lodging. He was a man of melancholy and gloom, and he shunned, as much as possible, all intercourse with the inhabitants of the castle and places adjacent. He ate little—kept closely shut up in his chamber by day—but in the twilight was often seen walking about the woods; and then, his manner, even at a distance, bespoke a distempered mind. His step was at one time hurried and irregular; at another, slow and feeble, and again all of a sudden he would pause and stand as still as death. He was looked upon as a fanatic in religion; but, as he offered harm to no living, he was pitied, and loved rather than feared. He was often heard conversing with

himself, or with some unseen being beside him; but if any one met or approached him, he started like a guilty person, and slunk away into the wood, or among the deep banks of the river.

It is now time to mention, that Carmichael did not fly the country, as Elizabeth expected; but, as no more victuals or wine were deposited in the appointed den, he found that to remain longer there in entire concealment was impracticable, and, therefore, that some new expedient was absolutely necessary. He was by the king's express command, and under the forfeiture of his life, banished twenty miles from court, wherever the court might be, and so long were the miles on those days, that Carmichael durst not approach his own hereditary domains when the court was at Edinburgh; but as the court was now at Crawmel, and within five miles of him, the danger of being discovered at that time was redoubled; besides which, the prejudice of the country was likely to run strongly against him, on account of the late murders. But notwithstanding of all this, so rooted were his affections upon Elizabeth, that maugre all danger and opposition, he determined to remain near her.

Some other disguise being now necessary—he threw away his red wig and beard, and, without any farther mask, equipped himself as a humble shepherd, with a gray plaid about his shoulders, and a broad blue bonnet on his head. He went and offered his services to one of his own tenants, who held the farm of Stenhope, in the immediate vicinity of Polmood.

His conditions were so moderate, that his services were accepted of, and he set about his new occupation with avidity, in hopes of meeting with his beloved Elizabeth—of being again reconciled to her, and perhaps of wrapping her in his gray plaid, in the green woods of Polmood—but wo the

while! she had again subjected herself to the guidance and the snares of the unprincipled Rosay.

He watched the woods and walks of Polmood, with more assiduity than his own flock; but so closely was Elizabeth haunted in these walks by Rosay, that he could never once encounter or discover her alone; he nevertheless continued to watch her with increased constancy, for he loved her above every other thing on earth.

Had Rosay been any other person than the king's own brother, he would have challenged him instantly; but, as it was, had he done so, complete ruin to him and his house would have ensued. However, rather than be completely baffled, he seems to have half determined on doing it. It is perhaps unwarrantable to assert, that he really formed such resolution, but it is certain he kept always his broad-sword hid in a hollow tree, at the entrance into the wood of Polmood, and whenever he strayed that way, he took it along with him below his plaid, whatever might happen.

A dreadful sensation was by this time excited about the castle of Polmood. A rumour had circulated, even before the burial of the two murdered chieftains, that the ghost of the late laird had been seen in the environs of the castle; which report was laughed at, and, except by the peasantry, totally disregarded. But, before a week had elapsed, the apparition had been again and again seen, and that by persons whose veracity could not be disputed. The terror became general in the family, particularly over the weaker individuals. It reigned with such despotic sway, that even the stoutest hearts were somewhat appalled. The menials deserted from their service in pairs—horror and sleepless confusion prevailed every night—comments and surmises occupied the day, and to such a height did the perturbation grow, that Elizabeth, and her counsellor Rosay, were obliged to come to the resolution of a sudden de-

parture. A short day was fixed on for the disposing of the costly furniture, or sending it away, and the castle of Polmood was to be locked up, and left desolate and void, for an habitation to the owlets and the spirits of the wilderness.

The report at first originated with the old housekeeper, who averred that she had heard her late master's voice; that he spoke to her distinctly in the dead of the night, and told her of some wonderful circumstance, which she could not remember, from having been so overpowered by fear; but that it was something about her lady. She delivered this relation with apparent seriousness; but there was so much incongruity and contradiction in it, that all who were not notoriously superstitious disbelieved it.

Shortly after this, a young serving man and a maiden, who were lovers, had gone out after the labours of the day into the covert of the wood, to whisper their love-sick tale. They were sitting in a little semi-circular den, more than half surrounded by flowery broom, which had an opening in front to an avenue in the wood; and the maid was leaning upon her lover's bosom, while he was resting against the bank, with his arms around her waist. Often before had they conversed on their little plans of future life, which were unambitious, and circumscribed within a narrow sphere. They were that night recapitulating them; and as much of their dependance had been on the bounty and protection of their late master, they could not dwell long on the subject without mentioning him, which they did with the deepest regret, and with some significant and smothered exclamations. From one thing to another, so serious and regretful was their frame of mind, that it led to the following dialogue, a singular one enough to have taken place between two young lovers, and at that hour of the evening, as the day-light was just hanging with a dying languishment over the ridge of the western hill.

"It is a sad thing that I cannot give over dreaming," William," said the fair rustic. "Do you think there is any other person so much troubled with their dreams as I am?"

"Your dreams must be always good and sweet, like yourself, Anna." "They are always sweet and delightful when I dream about you, William; but I have had some fearful dreams of late; heavy, heavy dreams! Ah! such dreams as I have had! I fear that they bode no good to us. What is it to dream of the dead, William?"

"It generally betokens good to the dreamer, or to those who are dreamed of, Anna." "Ah, William, I fear not! I have heard my mother say, that there was one general rule in dreaming, which might always be depended on. It was this, that dreams never bode good which do not leave grateful and pleasing impressions on the mind;—mine *must* be bad, very bad indeed! How comes it, William, that whenever we dream of the dead, they are always living?" "God knows, Anna! it is a curious reality in the nature of dreaming. We often dream of the living as being dead; but whenever we dream of those that are dead, they are always alive and well."

"Aye, it is indeed so, William; and we never then remember that they are departed this life—never once recollect that the grave separates us and them," "All these things have a language of their own, Anna, to those who understand them; but they are above our comprehension, and therefore we ought not to think of them, nor talk of them; for thinking of them leads us into error, and talking of them makes us sad; and to obviate both these, I will reave a kiss from your sweet lips, my Anna, and compel you to change the subject." "O no, William, do not; I love to talk of these things, for I am much concerned about them; and whatever concerns me I love to talk of to you."—"And, pray, what may those dreams have been, which have given my Anna so much concern?"

"I have been dreaming, and dreaming of our late master, William! Ah, such dreams I have had! I fear there has been foul play going on." "Hush, hush, my Anna! we must not say what we think about that; but, for my part, I know not what to think."—"Listen to me, William, but don't be angry, or laugh at me; I believe, that Alice the housekeeper's tale, about the ghost that spoke to her, is every word of it true."—"Do not believe any such thing, my dear Anna; believe me, it is nothing more than the workings of a distempered imagination. Because the late events are wrapt in mystery, the minds of individuals are oppressed by vague conjectures, and surmises of dark and infamous deeds, and in sleep the fancy turns to these images, and is frightened by fantasies of its own creation. I would not have you, nor any woman, to believe in the existence of ghosts."—"Ah, William, I could reason with you on that point for ever, for I must, and will always believe in it. That belief gives one a pleasing idea of an over-ruling Providence, of a just God, who will not suffer the guilty and the murderer to escape; nor those of his creatures, who are innocent, to be destroyed. But I know, William, that you will not disbelieve my word, therefore I will tell it to you, though I would not to any other. I said I dreamed of our late master—but, William, I believe as truly as I believe that I am lying in your arms, that I heard him speaking and lamenting last night."—"But that was only in your sleep—it was only through your sleep, my dear Anna, that you heard him."—"No, William; as far as I can judge, I was as fully awake as I am at this moment."—"My dear Anna, you must think no more of dreams and apparitions, there are really no such things in nature as apparitions. I could tell you a tale, that would——"

Here Anna laid her hand upon her lover's mouth to stop him, for she heard something that alarmed her. "Hush!" said she, in a low whisper; "what is that? I hear something

coming. Great God ! what can it possibly be that is here at this time of night ?” They held in their breath and listened, and distinctly heard a slight rustling among the branches, which they at length distinguished to be the sound of something approaching them with soft and gentle steps. It came close to the side of the bush where they lay, and then stood still. They were lying as still as death ; but they could see nothing for the broom, while their hearts were beating so, that their repressed breathing was almost cut short. After a considerable pause, it uttered a long deep groan ;—terror thrilled their whole frames ;—every hair on their heads crept as with life, and their spirits melted within them. Another pause ensued,—after which they heard it utter these words, in a tone of agony, and just loud enough to be distinctly heard :—“ Yes, yes ! it was she—it was she !—O wicked, wicked Elizabeth !” So saying, it came forward to the opening in the broom, where it stood before their sight. It had one hand upon its breast, and its eyes were fixed on the ground. In that position it remained for about half a minute, and then, in the same voice as before, said, “ The torments of hell are slight to this !” On uttering these words, it shook its head with a slow swimming motion, and vanished from their sight. It might have passed into the air—it might have sunk into the earth—it might have stood still where it was, for any thing they knew, as their senses were benumbed, and a darkness, deeper than that of the midnight dungeon, seemed to have fallen upon them.

For a considerable time did they lie panting in each other’s arms, without daring to utter a word. William first broke silence : “ Great God of heaven !” said he ; “ what is the meaning of this ?”—“ Did you see the figure that passed, William ?”—“ Yes, Anna.”—“ And did you not know the voice and the stride ?” said she.—“ Yes, yes ! it is needless, it is sinful to deny it ! I knew them too well—my mind is mazed and confounded ! Eternal God ! this is wonderful !”—“ Is it

not, William? I'm sure we saw him nailed in the coffin and laid in his grave."—"We did, Anna! we did!"—"And we saw him lying a lifeless, headless trunk; and the streams of blood were crusted black upon his arms, and upon his breast! did we not, William?"—"It is true, Anna! it is all true!"—"Yet here he is again, walking in his own real form and manner, and speaking in his own voice." The horror which these reflections occasioned, together with what she had just seen, were too much for the mind of the poor girl to brook: she crept closer and closer to her lover's bosom with a kind of frantic grasp, uttered one or two convulsive moans, and fainted away in his arms.

Agitated as the young man was, his fears for her got the better of his trepidation, or at least gave it a different bias; he sprung up and ran towards the river, which was nigh, to bring her some water. When he came near it, he found he had nothing to carry water in; but, as the only substitute within his reach for such a purpose, by an involuntary impulse, he pulled off his bonnet, and rushed to the side of a pool in order to fill it. But, when he stooped for that purpose, his hurry and agitation was such, that he slipped his foot, and fell headlong into the pool. This accident was not unfortunate, for the sudden immersion brought him better to his senses than any thing else could at that time have done. He soon regained his feet, filled his bonnet with water, and ran towards his beloved Anna. The bonnet would hold no water—so it was all gone in two seconds—however, he ran on, carrying it as if still full to the brim. When he came to her, and found that he could not give her a drink, as the next best resource, he clapped the wet bonnet upon her face, and pressed it to with both his hands. If she had been capable of breathing, he would certainly have suffocated her in a short time; but the streams of water, that ran down her neck and bosom, from the saturated bonnet, soon proved effective in restoring animation.

As soon as she was again able to speak distinctly, they fell both upon their knees, committed themselves to the care and protection of Heaven, and then walked home together, the maiden supported by her affectionate lover.

That very night was the dreadful intelligence circulated among the vassals and menials about the castle, and before noon, next day, it had gained ground exceedingly, and was indeed become a terrible story. It was in every one's mouth, that the ghost of the late laird had appeared to the two lovers in his own natural form and habit; that he had conversed familiarly with them, and told them that he was condemned to hell, and suffering the most dreadful torments; and that Elizabeth, his own lady, had murdered him.

That their laird should have been condemned to hell astonished the natives very much indeed; for they had always looked upon him as a very good man, and true to his king and country. However, some acknowledged that the spirit had better means of information than they had, and could not possibly be wrong; while others began to make the sage remark, that 'people were ill to know.'

But that Elizabeth should have been the murderer of her lord appeared far more unaccountable, as it was well known that she was at home during the whole of that day on which he was slain, and had spent it in the utmost gayety and bustle, making preparations for the accommodation of her guests in the evening. That she could have suborned the Laird of Lamington to murder him was as improbable; for, saving a slight salute, she had never once exchanged words with him; and it was utterly impossible that she could have held any converse with him, without the rest of the company having known of it.

It would have been blasphemy to have said the ghost was lying; yet, though none durst openly avow it, some went the

unwarrantable length of thinking, in their own hearts, that it was misinformed, or had some way taken up the story wrong.

The story reached the ears of Elizabeth. She was far from being naturally superstitious; and had, moreover, associated but little with the country people of Scotland, consequently, was not sufficiently initiated into the truth and mystery of apparitions; nay, she was not even a proselyte to the doctrine, which was a shameful error in her. But, instead of being displeased, as some would have been, at being blamed for the murder of her husband, she only laughed at it, and stated, that she wished the ghost would appear to her, and tell her such a story; that she would walk in the wood every night, in hopes of meeting it, that she might confront, and give it the lie in its teeth.

In this manner did the graceless Elizabeth sport and jeer about the well-attested and sublime truths, so long and so fondly cherished by our forefathers, even after she had heard the two young lovers relate their tale of wonder with the greatest simplicity, and after she had seen the young woman lying ill of a fever, into which her agitation had thrown her.—But mark the consequence:—

On that very night, or the one following, as Elizabeth was lying awake in her chamber, between twelve and one o'clock of the morning, she heard the sound of footsteps coming hastily up the stair. Her heart beat with a strange sensation; but the door of her apartment being locked in the inside, and the key taken out, she therefore knew that it was impossible for any thing to enter there.

However, it came close to her door, where it stopped, and she saw some glimmerings of light, which entered by the key-hole and frame of the door. The door was strong, and the bolt was fast; but, at the very first touch of that mysterious and untimely visitant, the massy lock opened with a loud jerk, and the door flew back to the wall with such violence, that

the clash made all the vaults of the castle to resound again;—when, horrid to relate ! who should enter but the identical form and figure of her late husband ! and in such a guise !—Merciful Heaven ! was there ever a female heart, but that of Elizabeth, which could have stood the shock ! He was half-naked, with his head and legs quite bare—his colour was pale as death—his hair bristled upon his crown—and his unearthly eyes rolled like those of one in a frenzy, or fit of madness ; he had a lighted torch in the one hand and a naked sword in the other, and in this guise he approached the bed where lay, all alone, the beauteous and helpless Elizabeth.

I have often had occasion to mention the cool unmoved temper of Elizabeth's mind ; still it was the mind of a woman, and any one will readily suppose that this was too much for the heart of any woman to bear. It was not. Some may term it insensibility, and certainly it bore a resemblance to it occasionally ; but it is an old established maxim among the inhabitants of the mountains, that “ he who is unconscious of any crime, is incapable of terror ;” and such maxims must always be held sacred by the collector of legends. May we not then, in charity, suppose that it was this which steeled the heart of Elizabeth against all sudden surprises and qualms of terror. Some readers may think that Elizabeth's conduct was not quite blameless—grant that it was not, still her heart was ~~not~~—her errors were errors of nature, not of principle ; and on the great basis of self-approval must all actions be weighed ; for how can criminality be attached to an action, when by that action no evil whatever was intended ? Certainly by no rule in which justice is predominant. Elizabeth was conscious of no guilt, and feared no evil.

When the dreadful spectre approached her bed, she was lying in such an attitude (when her extraordinary personal beauty is considered) as might have made the heart of the most savage fiend relent. Her face was turned towards

the door, the bed-clothes were flung a little back, so that her fair neck and bosom, like the most beautiful polished ivory, were partly seen, while one of her arms was lying carelessly outstretched above the coverlet, and the other turned back below her cheek.

Almost any other woman, placed in the same circumstances, would have swooned away, or raised such an hideous outcry and disturbance, as would have alarmed all within the castle. Elizabeth did neither—she kept her eyes steadily fixed on the horrid figure, and did not so much as move, or alter her position, one inch. The apparition likewise kept its looks bent upon her, came onward, and stared over her in the bed; but in those looks there was no softness, no love, nor the slightest shade of pity, but a hellish gleam of disappointment, or something resembling it. He approached, turned round, strode to the other corner of the room, and she heard it pronounce, with great emphasis, the word “Again!” After which it walked hastily out at the door, which it closed, and left locked as before.

Elizabeth neither arose herself, nor did she call up any of her household, until it was day, though she lay in a state of the greatest uneasiness. She was neither terrified nor chilled with dread, but she was utterly astonished, and what she had seen was to her quite unaccountable.

Next day she told it to her waiting-maid, who was a great favourite with her, and who implicitly believed it; and she afterwards related the whole to Rosay, who used all his rhetoric in order to persuade her that it was a dream; but she assured him, with the greatest calmness, that it was not, and requested that both he and the maid would watch with her in the same chamber the night following. Rosay consented, but pleaded hard that the company of the maid-servant might be dispensed with; and though his suit was listened to with the utmost complacency, it was not granted.

It is necessary, before proceeding farther, to state some particulars of Rosay's behaviour to Elizabeth during the time that had elapsed of her widowhood; for the motives which induced to such behaviour cannot now be ascertained. He talked now often to her of marriage, as soon as *decency would permit*, and had even gone so far as to press her to consent, but this was only when she appeared to take offence at his liberties, and when he could not find aught else to say. He was nevertheless all the while using his most strenuous endeavours to seduce her morals and gain possession of her person; and, as the time of their retirement at Polmood was now speedily drawing to a conclusion, he determined to avail himself of every opportunity which his situation afforded, in order to accomplish his selfish purpose. He well knew, that if he could not prevail upon her to yield to his wishes while they remained in that solitude, and where Elizabeth had no other person to amuse or attend to her save himself, he could never be able to accomplish it at court, where she would be surrounded by such a number of admirers. These considerations brought him to the resolution of leaving no art or stratagem unattempted.

The truth is, that Elizabeth seems to have admitted of freedoms and familiarities from Rosay, which she ought not to have admitted; but such being the court fashions in those days, she attributed these freedoms to the great admiration in which he held her person and accomplishments, and not only forgave, but seemed pleased with them. He was accustomed to toy with her, and kiss her hand right frequently; and, indeed, she may be said to have granted him every freedom and indulgence that he could with propriety ask. But either from exalted notions of the dignity of the sex, or out of regard for her exquisite beauty and form, she seems to have hitherto maintained the singular resolution of never subjecting her person to the will of any man living;—if

she did so to her late husband, it was more than those who were acquainted with them had reason to suppose. She had always repulsed Rosay sharply when he presumed to use any undue freedoms with her, but with so much apparent gayety and good-humour, that the amorous duke knew not what to make of her sentiments. His frequent proposals of marriage she did not much regard or encourage; for perhaps she was aware, that it was only a specious pretence, a piece of courtly gallantry, when he could not find ought better to say. He haunted her evening and morning—led her into the thickest parts of the woods by day, and harrassed her so much every night at parting, that she was always obliged to lock her chamber-door, and refuse every kind of converse after a certain hour. And one evening, having gained admission before it was late, he absolutely refused to go away; on which she rose with much archness as if to seek something—walked off and left him, locking him up fast until the morning. Such was their behaviour to one another, and such their pursuits, when they began to be alarmed with the appearance of the ghost.

It having been agreed, as formerly stated, that Rosay, Elizabeth, and the waiting-maid, should all three watch together in Elizabeth's apartment, on the night following that on which the mysterious guest had first visited her; the scheme was accordingly put in execution. Elizabeth said she believed it would appear again; but Rosay mocked at the idea and assured her that it would not; for he was convinced Elizabeth had only had a frightful dream. He said, if it had the effrontery to come and face them all three, that, in the first place, he would endeavour to deter it from entering, until it had first declared its errand and business there; and if it did enter without being announced, he should soon make it glad to withdraw. With such a redoubted champion at their head, the women began to muster not a little courage.

Accordingly, they went up all three to the apartment be-

tween the hours of ten and eleven at night, and placed themselves in a row at the farthest corner of it, with their faces turned toward the door. Elizabeth was employed in sewing a piece of rich tapestry, which had for a long time engaged her at leisure hours.—She was dressed in her mourning apparel, and the duke sat on one side of her, and her woman on the other.

Some time passed away in unmeaning and inanimate chat, which still grew more and more dull as midnight approached. Clocks were then very rare in Scotland, but the hours by night were rung upon the great bell in the porch; at least this was the custom at the castle of Polmood. The warder had an hour-glass, which he was bound to watch with great punctuality, and tell each hour upon the bell.

The twelfth hour was rung, and still nothing appeared; nor was any thing unusual heard. About half an hour afterwards, they thought they heard a door open at some distance, and with great caution—it was somewhere within the castle, but in what part they could not certainly distinguish—the noise soon ceased, and they heard no more of it. The fire had fallen away, and the embers and pale ashes fairly presided over the few live coals that remained, while the cricket was harping behind them without intermission—the lamps burnt dim, for no one remembered to trim them—all was become sullen and eiry, and the conversation was confined to the eyes alone. The bell rung one! There is something particularly solemn in the tone of that little hour at any time—it is no sooner heard than it is gone—the ear listens to hear further, but the dying sounds alone reach it. That night it was peculiarly solemn, if not awful; for the bell was deep-toned, and the night dark and still. As the last vibrations of the tone were dying away, Elizabeth happened to cast her eyes upon Rosay, and she thought there was something so ghastly in his looks, that she could not forbear smiling. She was proceeding

to accost him, when, just as the first sounds passed her lips, she stopped short, and raised herself upon the seat, as in the act of listening ; for, at that moment, she heard the footsteps of one who seemed approaching the back of the door with great softness and caution. “ There it is now ;” said she to Rosay, in a low whisper. Rosay’s heart seemed to have started into his throat—he was literally choked with terror—he had, however, so much mind remaining, as to recollect something of his proposed plan of operations, and rising, he stammered towards the door, in order to prevent it from entering ; but ere he reached the middle of the floor, the door flew open, and the same dreadful being entered, in the very guise in which it had come the preceding night.

It was enough for Rosay—much more than he could bear. He uttered a stifled cry, like that of a person drowning, and fell lifeless at full length upon the floor. The waiting-maid took refuge behind her lady, and howled so incessantly, that she never suffered one shriek to lose hold of another. Elizabeth sat motionless, like a statue, with her eyes fixed upon the apparition. It paused, and gazed at them all with an unsteady and misbelieving look—then advanced forward—stepped over the forlorn duke, and looked at the bed. The bed was neatly spread down, without a fold or wrinkle. It took another look of Elizabeth, but that was a look of rage and despair—and turning to Rosay, it put itself in the attitude of striking—laid the edge of its sword upon his neck, in order to take a surer aim—then rearing the weapon on high, it raised itself to the stroke, as if intent on severing his head from his body at a blow ; but just when the stroke was quivering to its descent, the vengeful spright seemed to relent—its arm relaxed, and it turned the sword to the left shoulder—mused for a few seconds, and gave the prostrate duke such a toss with its foot, as heaved him almost to the other side of the room, and, without uttering a word, hastily retired, locking the door behind it.

The loud and reiterated cries of the waiting-woman at length brought all within the castle to the door of the haunted chamber. Elizabeth took down the key, and admitted them with the greatest deliberation; but so wrapt was she in astonishment, and so bewildered in thought, that she did not once open her lips to any of them. She retired again to her seat, where she sat down and leaned her cheek upon her hand, paying no regard to the horror of the group, nor to the bustle they made.

The first thing they did was to lift the forlorn duke, who had already begun to manifest signs of returning animation. When they raised him up, they found that his face and breast were all bathed in blood, and conjectured, with great reason, that some foul and murderous work had been going on. They were for some time confirmed in this suggestion, by the asseverations of the duke, who assured them that he was a dead man, and run through the body in a great number of places. On examining his body all over, however, they could discover no mark or wound whatever; and they all agreed in the conclusion, that he had only been bleeding plentifully at the nose. He complained of grievous hurts and pains about his loins; but as Elizabeth never thought proper to inform him how he came by these hurts when in a state of insensibility, he was almost persuaded of what the vessels were endeavouring to impress upon him, namely, that it was all owing to the effects of fear. Rosay had, however, got enough of watching for ghosts—more than he approved of, and frankly declared off, taking at the same time a solemn oath, that he would never lodge another night within the castle of Polmood. Elizabeth rallied him, and said, that he would surely never abandon her in such an unheard-of dilemma, but continue to sleep in the castle as heretofore—that she was perfectly willing to sleep in her own chamber still, for all that was come and gone, and why might not he as well keep to his, in which he had never

been disturbed. But he said, that the spirit seemed to have a particular malevolence against him, and he would on no consideration risk another encounter with it. Alas! the next encounter that he had with it was not far distant, and terminated in a more fatal manner, as will be seen in the sequel.

From that time forth, Rosay mounted his horse every night, and rode to the castle of John Tweedie of Drumelzier, returning always to Polmood in the morning; but he never told that chief the real cause why he changed his lodgings. On the contrary, he said, that he did not judge it altogether consistent with decency and decorum, for him to stay in the castle with the young and beautiful Elizabeth every night, now that she had no husband to protect her—that the tongue of scandal might blast her beauty and future fortunes, and therefore he was resolved that no infamy should attach to her on his account. Drumelzier was much astonished at this instance of self-denial; but, as Rosay continued to persist in the plan, he took no notice of it.

CHAP. XIX.

ELIZABETH remained in the same state as before, without any seeming alarm. During the time of the spectre's late appearance, she had carefully observed and noted every thing that passed, which no one else had done; and the more she considered of it, the more fully was she convinced, that the apparition was a mortal man, made up of flesh, blood, and bones, like other people. Certain that this disguise was assumed to answer some purpose, her suspicion fell on Carmichael as the author of the whole plot, from knowing how expertly he could assume characters, and how he

had lately duped herself, the laird, and all the country, as Connel the gardener, even when they were conversing with him daily face to face. Her husband it could not be! then who could it be else, if it was not Carmichael?—Polmood, and he were nearly of the same form and stature—but how he was enabled to counterfeit Polmood's looks so well, she could not comprehend;—still, she thought it was some artifice, and that Carmichael must be at the bottom of it.

She had likewise noticed, that the spectre opened the door with a key, which it left in the lock during the time it remained in the room, and then, on retiring, locked the door and took the key with it. She had thought much of that circumstance since it first appeared, and determined to pay particular attention to it; but, as usual, she kept her thoughts to herself. She knew that, when the laird lived, they had each a key to that chamber, and some other places of importance in the castle; and what was become of these keys now she could not discover. However, she resolved to make trial of the spirit's ingenuity, by a simple expedient, with which she had often balked the laird's designs of entering when alive, and she weened that he could not have gained much additional skill in mechanics, nor muscular strength, since he was consigned to the grave. This expedient was no other than suffering her own key to remain in the lock, and turning it half round, so that no key could possibly enter from without; which she put in practice, and waited the issue without the least emotion; but, from the time that Rosay left the castle by night, the apparition never troubled her more.

Some one or other of the vassals, indeed, was always seeing or hearing it every night; and well did the lower orders thereabouts encourage the belief: it was the pleasantest thing that had ever happened in the country; for the young women were all so dreadfully alarmed, that not one of them durst sleep a night by themselves for twenty miles around; and they soon very

sagaciously discovered, that one of their own sex was no safeguard at all in such perilous circumstances.

In this manner did the time pass away for several days. Rosay and Elizabeth met every morning—spent the day together, and separated again at night. The shepherd continued to range the woods of Polmood, asking at every one whom he by accident met, for a strayed sheep that he had lost; but, alas! that fair, that beauteous lamb, could he never see, unless under the care of another shepherd—the old crazy palmer persevered in the same course as before; and the unprofitable menials spent the day in sleep and idleness, and the night in fear and trembling; sometimes half a dozen of them in one bed, and sometimes only two, according as the mode of transposition suited—but all of them in a state of sufferance and bondage. The time was at hand when that family was likely to be broken up for ever.

It happened one day that Rosay had led Elizabeth into the thickest part of the wood, where there was a natural bower in the midst of a thicket of copsewood; in that bower they were always wont to rest themselves, and had one day lately been somewhat surprised by a noise, like that of a stifled cough; but they could not discover from whom or from whence it proceeded—yet they did not suppose any to be in that wood but themselves, yet it seemed to be somewhere near by them.

Into this bower Rosay wanted to lead Elizabeth as usual, but she objected to it, and said, he never behaved to her in that bower as became him, and she was determined never more to go into that bower in his company. Rosay said, that since she had given him the hint, he would not presume upon her good nature any more by amorous freedoms; but added, that he would not be denied that piece of confidence in his honour, especially as she knew that her commands were always sufficient to guide his conduct; a mandate he never dared to disobey, though his passion for her were even more

violent than it had hitherto been, which was impossible. She said, that might be all true, yet it was as good to give no occasion of putting that power to the test. However, by dint of raillery, and promises of the most sacred regard to her *increasing delicacy*, he prevailed upon her to accompany him into the bower, where they leaned them down upon the sword.

Rosay began as usual to toy and trifle with her, while she, in return, rallied him in a witty and lightsome manner—but his amorous trifling soon wore to rudeness, and that rudeness began by degrees to manifest itself in a very unqualified manner. She bore with him, and kept her temper as long as she could, making several efforts to rise and leave him, which he always overcame. She uttered no complaint nor reproach, but, on seeing his brutal purpose too fairly avouched, by a sudden and strenuous exertion, she disengaged herself from his embraces at once—flew away lightly into the wood, and left him lying in vexation and despair.

They had been watched all the time of this encounter, by one who ought not to have seen them; and what was worse, who saw indistinctly through the brushwood, and judged of the matter quite otherwise than as it fell out, drawing conclusions the most abstract from propriety of conduct, and the true character of the fair but thoughtless Elizabeth.

She was not gone above the space of one minute, when Rosay heard the noise of one rushing into the bower; and, lifting up his eyes, he beheld the old maniac, who has sometimes been mentioned, approaching him with rapid strides. "Get thee gone, thou old fanatic," said Rosay; "what seekest thou here?" The words were scarcely all pronounced, ere Rosay felt himself seized by a grasp which seemed to have the force of ten men united in it. It was the old palmer alone, who appeared to Rosay at that time to be some infernal giant, or devil incarnate, so far beyond all human comparison was the might of his arm. He dragged the weak effeminate duke

from his den, who at first attempted to struggle with him; but his struggles were those of the ~~kill~~ in the paws of the lion. He next essayed to expostulate, and afterwards to cry out; ~~but~~ the superlative monster prevented both, by placing his foot upon the duke's neck, and crushing his face so close to the earth, that he was unable to utter a sound. He then, in the course of a few seconds, bound his hands behind his back, run a cord about his neck, and tucked him up on a bough that bent above them. The maniac never all the while spoke a word, but had sometimes gnashed his teeth over his victim, in token of the most savage satisfaction.

As soon as he had fastened up the unfortunate duke, he ran into the wood to seek Elizabeth, who had gone to the eastward. He soon found her returning by another path to the castle; and laying hold of her in the same savage manner, he dragged her to the fatal spot. She had taken great offence at the late conduct of the duke, and had determined to suffer him no more to come into her presence; but when she saw him hanging in that degraded state, pale and lifeless, she was benumbed with horror. "Thou monster!" said she, "who art thou, who hast dared to perpetrate such an act as this?" "I will soon show thee who I am, poor abandoned, unhappy wretch," said he; on which he threw off his cowl, beard, and gown, and her own husband stood before her. It was no spirit—no phantom of air—no old fanatic palmer—it was the real identical Norman Hunter of Polmood—but in such a guise!—Good God! such features! such looks! it is impossible for man to describe them. "Now, what hast thou to say for thyself?" said he. "That I never yet in my life wronged thee," returned she, firmly.—"Never wronged me! worthless unconscionable minion! were not these charms, which were my right, denied to me, and prostituted to others? For thee have I suffered the torments of the damned, and have delighted in their deeds. Thy scorn and perfidy has driven me to distraction,

and now shalt thou reap the fruits of it. Long and patiently have I watched to discover thee prostituting thyself to one or other of thy paramours, that I might glut myself with vengeance ; and now I have effected it, you shall hang together till the crows and the eagles devour you piecemeal."

Elizabeth held her peace ; for she saw that speech was unavailable, and that his frantic rage was not to be staid—it seemed to redouble every moment, for, without the smallest compunction, he threw her down, bound her hands and feet, and, with paralyzed and shaking hands, knitted the cord about her beauteous neck, and proceeded to hang her up beside her lifeless paramour.

It is impossible for the heart of man to conceive any scene more truly horrible than this was. Polmood seems to have been completely raving mad ; for he was all the while crying over her in the most piteous rending agony—he was literally trembling and howling with despair, bellowing like a lion or a bull, yet did he not for a moment stay his fatal purpose.

Elizabeth, when she made her escape from the violence of Rosay in the bower, did not turn homeward, but held her course away to the east, until she came to a small mountain stream that bounded the wood. Carmichael was not at that time in the wood but on the hill above it, when, to his joy and astonishment, he perceived her alone, washing her face in the brook, and adjusting some part of her dress. There were but two paths in the wood, by which it was possible to pass through it from east to west, and one of these paths Carmichael knew she behoved to take in her way homeward.

Now, it happened that the fatal bower was situated exactly at the point where these two paths approached nearest to each other. Toward this point did Carmichael haste with all the speed he could make, in order that he might intercept Elizabeth, whatever path she took, and bring her to an explanation. Judge what his sensations were ! when, bolting

from a thicket, the unparalleled scene of horror, death, and madness, was disclosed to his view at once. Rosay was hanging quite dead, and already was the cord flung over the bough by which the beauteous Elizabeth was to be drawn up beside him. The inexorable ruffian had even laid hold of it, and begun to apply his sinewy strength, when Carmichael rushed forward with a loud cry of despair, and cut both the ropes by which they were suspended. Ere he had got this effected, Polmood grappled with him—cursed him in wrath, and gave him a tremendous blow with his fist. Carmichael returned the salute so lustily, that his antagonist's mouth and nose gushed blood. Carmichael knew Polmood at first sight, for he was then unmasked; but Polmood did not recognise him through his disguise of a shepherd. He, however, grasped him closer, intent on revenge for his bold interference and emphatic retort. Carmichael well knew with whom he had to do, and how unable any man was to resist the arm of Polmood in a close struggle; therefore, by a sudden and violent exertion, he wrenched himself from his hold—sprung a few paces backward, and drew out his sword from beneath his gray plaid. During this last struggle, Carmichael's bonnet had been knocked off, and, at the next glance, Polmood knew him. All his supposed injuries burst upon his remembrance at once, and this second discovery confirmed the whole of his former suspicions. When he saw it was Carmichael, he uttered a loud howl for joy. "Ah! is it then so!" said he, "the man of all the world whom I wished most to meet! Now shall all my wrongs be revenged at once! Heaven and hell, I thank you both for this!" and with that he gnashed his teeth, and uttered another maniac howl.

He drew his sword, or lifted that which had belonged to Rosay, I am not certain which, and flew to the combat. He was deemed the best archer, the strongest man, and the best swordsman of his day. Carmichael was younger, and more

agile, but he wanted experience, consequently the chances were against him.

The onset was inconceivably fierce—the opposition most desperate—and never perhaps was victory better contested—each depended on his own single arm for conquest, and on that alone. Carmichael lost ground, and by degrees gave way faster and faster, while his antagonist pressed him to the last: yet this seemed to have been done intentionally; for when they reached a little lawn where they had fair scope for sword-play, the former remained firm as a rock, and they fought for some minutes, almost foot to foot, with the most determined bravery. Carmichael won the first hit of any consequence. Polmood's fury, and the distracted state of his mind, seem to have given his opponent the advantage over him, for he first wounded him in the shoulder of the sword-arm, and in the very first or second turn thereafter, run him through the body.

Polmood fell, cursing Carmichael, Elizabeth, his wayward fortune, and all mankind; but, when he found his last moments approaching, he grew calm, sighed, and asked if Elizabeth was still alive. Carmichael did not know—"Haste," said he; "go and see; and if she is, I would speak with her—if she is not, I suppose we shall soon meet in circumstances miserable enough." Carmichael hastened to the spot where he had cut the two bodies from the tree, where he found the beautiful Elizabeth, living indeed, but in the most woful and lamentable plight that ever lady was in. She was nothing hurt, for she had never been pulled from the ground. But there was she, lying stretched beside a strangled corpse, with her hands and her feet bound, and a rope tied about her neck.

Carmichael wrapped her in his shepherd's plaid, for her own clothes were torn, and then loosed her in the gentlest manner he could, making use of the most soothing terms all

the while. But when he raised her, wrapped her in his plaid, and desired her to go and speak to her dying husband, he found that her senses were wandering, and that she was incapable of talking coherently to any one. He led her to the place where Polmood lay bleeding to death; but this new scene of calamity affected her not, nor did it even appear to draw her attention: her looks were fixed on vacancy, and she spoke neither good nor bad. Carmichael strove all that he could, to convince the dying man of the injustice and ungenerosity of his suspicions with regard to Elizabeth, whose virtue he assured him was unspotted, if any woman's on earth was so; and farther said, that it was the consciousness of that alone, which had led her to indulge in youthful levities, which both her own heart, and the example of the court, had taught her to view as perfectly innocent.

Polmood seemed to admit of this, but not to believe it; he however grasped her hand—bade her farewell, and said that he forgave her.—“If you *are* innocent;” said he, “what a wretch am I!—but there is one who knows the secrets of all hearts, and to his mercy and justice I leave you. For my own part I leave this world without any hope; but things must be as they will—I have now no time for reparation.—If you are innocent Elizabeth, may you be happier than I could ever make you—happier than I wished to make you, you never can be.—But if you are not innocent, may all the curses of guilt fall on you—may you be miserable in this life, as you have made me; and miserable in the next, as I shall be.” She was still incapable of making any consistent reply—she sometimes appeared as forcing herself to listen, but her ideas would not be collected—she uttered some broken sentences, but they were totally unintelligible.

Carmichael then, with some difficulty, gained possession of a few leading circumstances, relating to the two bodies that were found at the straits of Gamesope, one of which was taken

for that of Polmood himself. The thread of the tale was not very palpable, for the dying chief could only then express himself in short unfinished sentences; but, as far as could be gathered, the circumstances seem to have been as follows.

Polmood had heard on the night before the hunt, as has been related, a confession of Rosay's guilt from his own mouth. Nay, he had even heard him exult in his conquest, and speak of his host in the most contemptuous terms. This excited his rage and indignation to such a degree, that he resolved to be revenged on the aggressor that day—he had vowed revenge, and deprecated the most potent curses on himself, if Rosay was ever suffered again to return and dishonour him under his own roof, and then brag of his lawless delights.—He watched him all the day of the hunt, but could never find an opportunity to challenge him, except in the midst of a crowd, where his revenge would have been frustrated. As it drew towards the evening, he came to the ford of Gamesope, where he halted; judging, that Rosay and Hamilton must necessarily return by that pass, from the course he saw them take. He had waited but a short time, when he saw two riders approach, whom he conceived for certain to be Rosay and Hamilton, whereas they were in truth, Sir Patrick Hepburn, and Donald of Lamington. Sir Patrick not only resembled Rosay much in his personal appearance, but his horse was of the same colour; which Polmood did not know, or did not advert to.—It was wearing late—the mist was dark and thick—the habiliments were in every respect similar. All these combined, misled the blindly passionate and distracted Polmood so completely, that he had actually cleft the scull of the one, and given the other his death wounds in self-defence, ere ever he was aware of his error.

Desperate cases suggest desperate remedies.—As the only means of averting instant punishment, and accomplishing

THE BRIDAL OF POLMOOD.

dire revenge on the real incendiaries, which swayed him much more than the love of life, he put his own sword in Lamington's hand, which he closed firm upon it, and his own sandals upon his feet: he then cut off the heads from the bodies, and hid them, being certain that no one could distinguish the trunks; and, as he deemed, so it fell out. The place where that fatal affray happened, is called Donald's Cleuch to this day.

Polmood had now no way left of approaching his own castle but in disguise. Intent on executing his great purpose of revenge, with every circumstance of conviction to his own heart of the guilt of the parties, he so effectually concealed himself under the cowl, beard, and weeds of a pilgrim monk, that he was enabled to stay in his own castle, get possession of his own keys, and watch all their motions without being suspected.

The inexplicable mysteries of the ghost, and the murder of the two knights, being thus satisfactorily explained to the world, the soul of the great, the brave, the misguided Norman Hunter of Polmood, forsook its earthly tenement, and left his giant mould a pale disfigured corse in the wood that had so lately been his own.

Carmichael conducted Elizabeth home in the most delicate manner possible—committed her to the care of her women—and caused the two bodies to be brought home and locked up in a chamber of the castle. He then went straight and threw himself at the king's feet, declaring the whole matter, and all the woful devastation Polmood's jealousy had occasioned among his friends and followers. The king was exceedingly grieved for the loss of his brother, and more especially at the disgraceful manner in which he had been cut off; but as none knew the circumstances, save Carmichael and Elizabeth, they schemed to keep it secret, and they effected this in a great measure, by spreading a report that his death

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had happened in another quarter, to which he had been despatched in haste.

The king was soon convinced, that no blame whatever could be attached to Carmichael, as he had slain his antagonist in his own defence, and in defence of a lady's life; and, after questioning him strictly, with respect to the disguises which he had assumed, he was convinced that his motives throughout had been disinterested, generous, and honourable. In matters that related to gallantry and love, James was an easy and lenient judge, and was graciously pleased to take Sir John Carmichael again into his royal favour and protection.

Elizabeth continued many days in a state of mind in which there seemed a considerable degree of derangement. She sometimes maintained, for whole days together, a dumb callous insensibility; at other times she spoke a good deal, but her speech was inconsistent. From that state, she sunk into a settled melancholy, and often wept bitterly when left alone. It appears that she then began to think much by herself—to reflect on her bypast life; and the more she pondered on it, the more fully was she convinced that she had acted wrong. There was no particular action of her life, with which she could charge herself, that was heinous; but, when these actions had occasioned so much bloodshed and wo, it was evident they had been far amiss. Her conclusion finally was, that the general tenor of her life had been manifestly wrong, and that though the line did not appear crooked or deformed, it had been stretched in a wrong direction.

These workings of the mind were sure preludes to feelings and sensations more tender and delicate than any she had hitherto experienced—more congenial to her nature, and more soothing to the female heart. The heart that reflects seriously, will soon learn to estimate the joys of society aright

—will feel that it must depend upon others for its felicity ; and that the commixture of mutual joys and sorrows is greatly preferable to the dull monotony of selfish gratification.

Carmichael visited her every day for a whole year, without ever once mentioning love. Before this period had expired, it was needless to mention it ; gratitude, the root from which female love springs, if that love is directed as it ought to be, so softened the heart of Elizabeth, and by degrees became so firmly knit to him, that she could not be happy when out of his company. They were at last married, and enjoyed, amid a blooming offspring, as much of happiness and peace as this fleeting and imperfect scene of existence can well be expected to confer.

Some may perhaps say, that this tale is ill-conceived, unnatural, and that the moral of it is not palpable ; but let it be duly considered, that he who sits down to write a novel or romance—to produce something that is merely the creation of his own fancy, may be obliged to conform to certain rules and regulations ; while he who transmits the traditions of his country to others—does wrong, if he do not transmit them as they are. He may be at liberty to tell them in his own way, but he ought by all means to conform to the incidents as handed down to him ; because the greater part of these stories have their foundation in truth. That which is true cannot be unnatural, as the incidents may always be traced from their first principles—the passions and various prejudices of men ; and from every important occurrence in human life a moral may with certainty be drawn. And I would ask, if there is any moral with which it is of more importance to impress mankind than this ?—That he who ventures upon the married state, without due regard to congeniality of dispositions, feelings, and pursuits, ventures upon a shoreless sea, with neither star nor rudder to direct his course, save unruly and misguided passions, which soon must

overwhelm him, or bear him farther and farther from the haven of peace for ever.—Never then was precept more strikingly illustrated by example, than in the incidents recorded in the foregoing tale.

KING GREGORY.

KING Gregory sits in Dunbarton tower,
He looks far o'er the dale and down ;
“ What boots it me,” said Gregory,
“ That all the land I see's my own ?

“ Scotland is mine by heritage,
And Erin yields and bows the knee,
And the southron lads they frown afar,
But they darena' parle again wi' me ;

“ For they ha'e gotten the meddler's cast,
Their doughty raids ha'e cost them dear ;
They'll come nae mair to fair Scotland,
Or dare her sons to deeds o' weir.

“ The shield hangs useless in my hall,
The sword rusts on the yeoman's thigh,
The hind is whistling o'er the dale,
And here sits sachless Gregory.

“ O, I may spread my sails of silk,
And lightly sweep along the sea,
And I may mount my milk-white steed,
And chase the dun deer o’er the lea ;

“ But aye at e’en when I come hame,
Frae the firth or the muirland hill,
I drink my wine, and I list my fame,
But there’s something a wanting still.”—

King Gregory sat in Dunbarton tower,
He looked afar o’er land and sea ;
He saw his gray hills round him stand,
And the vale and the greenwood tree.

He saw the links and the shores of Clyde,
And the sea that rowed with ceaseless play ;
It was dyed wi’ green, it was dyed wi’ red,
And it tryed to climb the rock so gray,
But aye it fell wi’ a grumbling sound,
And left behind the dewy spray.

It was not the mountain; it was not the dale,
Nor the fairy hues that dyed the sea,
Nor the wave that wrestled wi’ the rock,
That drew King Gregory’s wistful e’e ;

It was the maidens on Leven side,
That walked or played with blithesome glee,
For they were lythe of lire and limb,
And O, but they were bright of blee !

King Gregory went into his bower ;
That bower was fair and that bower was wide ;

King Gregory went into his hall,
And he strode it o'er from side to side.

King Gregory went to his chamber,
And looked around with joyful brow ;
He looked into his royal bed,
And he found there was meet room for two.

King Gregory called his nobles in :
“ My gallant Knights, pray list to me ;
My day of life is past the noon,
And the gray hairs wave aboon my bree.

“ Seek me a may of noble kin,
I reckon nought of her dower nor land,
Be she a fair and comely dame,
As fits the Queen of fair Scotland.”

“ Then every Baron rose with speed,
Who had fair daughters of his own,
And ilk ane roosed the child he loved
Aboon all maids that e'er were known.

“ O, they were all sae fair and good,
King Gregory was in ecstasie ;
And every ane that was defined,
King Gregory thought, “ that's she for me.”

But up spake Douglas of the Dale,
A grim and stalwart carle was he,
“ My liege, I have two maidens young,
But they're somewhat dark, like you and me ;

“ But John of Erol has a maid,
For comely maik and courtesye,
Her like ne’er clove the summer gale,
Since Scotland rose up frae the sea :

“ That e’er was bred a form sae fair,
Of earthly life I could not ween ;
And ever since I saw her face,
I deemed her formed to be a Queen.”

Then every noble Lord stood dumb,
And cast at him an angry e’e ;
But all allowed, in sullen mood,
That Erol’s maid was fair to see.

The King has written a broad letter,
And sealed it with his signet ring ;
And he has sent to Erol’s Lord,
To bring his daughter to the King :

“ And see that she be robed in silk,
All fringed wi’ the gowden cramasye,
For I have neither spouse nor child,
And Queen of Scotland she shall be.”

When Erol looked the letter on,
A blithe and happy man was he ;
But ere the half of it was done,
There was something glistened in his e’e.

Then Erol turned him round about,
And he stamped, and he cried, “ O wo is me !
I have pledged my word to Athol’s Lord,
And a Queen my child must never be.

WINTER EVENING TALES.

“ O might I live to see the day,
How blithely would I close my e'en !
I've seen enough, could I but see
My bonny Hay the Scottish Queen.”

“ Haste to the King, my little page,
And say, my daughter he shall see ;
That she's o'ercome with grateful love—
Say that, and leave the rest to me.”

O ! but King Gregory was fain,
The beauteous Hay was all his dream ;
And aye he combed his raven locks,
And aye he bathed him in the stream :

And aye he haunted Leven side,
And bent above the wave so cool ;
For there was no mirror in the land,
But the streamlet or the standing pool.

And King Gregory saw his buirdly form
With pleasure never known before ;
And King Gregory thought, his hanging brow
Of majesty the signal bore.

But the rimy fringe upon his beard,
O ! but it grieved his heart to see ;
And ill he brooked the silver hairs
That floated o'er his dark e'e-bree.

But John of Erol he was sad,
Nor wist he how to win the day ;
He feared the pride of Athol's Lord,
And he feared the heart of bonny Hay.

For well he knew he long had wooed
With fondest love and fervencye,
And rowed her in his Highland plaid,
When there was ne'er an eye to see :

And well he knew that maiden's love,
Is by such long endearments won ;
And much he feared that Athol's Lord,
Erol and Stormont would o'er-run :

He knew, that should the King assay
To wear him in his Highland glen,
He had much better meet again,
Canute the Dane, and all his men.

The lovely Hay sat in her bower,
Her gowden locks the breezes swang ;
And aye she looked to the Athol hills,
And aye she lilted and she sang

“ The Highland hills are bonny hills,
Although they kythe so darkly blue ;
The rock-rose nods upon the cliff,
The heather blooms their brows bedew.

“ The bracs are steep, and the dells are deep,
And the water sings unto the tree ;
Fair is the face of Lowland dale,
But dearer far yon hills to me :

“ For all yon hills will soon be mine,
Their grizly tops and glens of dew ;
And mine shall be the bravest Lord
That ever gathering bugle blew.”

“ O ! he has rowed me in his plaid,
And he has made my bosom fain ;
Which never man has done but he,
And never man shall do again ! ”

And aye the southland breeze came bye,
And blew aside her kirtle green ;
And aye it kissed her glowing cheek,
And aye it heaved her bosom's screen.

And sure so light and fair a form
Was never stretched on Ila's shore ;
And sure that moulded lily breast—
Ah ! it was ne'er so white before !

Yet, from that fair and comely form,
The lady raised a startled e'e ;
The colour altered on her cheek,
And the tear-drop fell upon her knee.

Her song is past, and gone the blast,
Up stands her father by her side :
“ Rise up, rise up, my daughter dear,
Thou ne'er canst be Lord Athol's bride :

“ Or else my life lies in a wad—
Our royal liege has sent for thee ;
He bids me robe you in the silk,
With gowden gear and cramasye :

“ For he has neither spouse nor child,
And past and signed is this decree ;
That thou, the fairest of the land,
Forthwith shalt Queen of Scotland be.”

“ My faith is pledged, and so is thine ;
 No royal bed nor crown for me ;
 I shall be bride to Athol's Lord,
 Or bride on earth I'll never be.”

“ O ! daughter of thy father's house,
 Hast thou no memory nor fear ?
 And well I ween, the Athol Chief
 Would quit thee for a herd of deer.”

“ He'll sooner brave the King and thee ;
 He'll come with all his hardy clan ;
 And then the King will buy his bride
 With blood of many a Lowland man

The Grants, the Frasers, and M'Leods,
 And wild M'Phersons, him will join ;
 The warlike Comyns of the North,
 The Gordon, and the brave Aboyne.

Oh ! ere he win Lord Athol's bride,
 Or brave the lion in his den,
 Trust me, he'll easier cow again,
 Canute the Dane, and all his men.

‘ Should Athol's Lord yield up his right,
 And neither love nor wrath bewray,
 I'll plight King Gregory my troth,
 And blithely, cheerly, trudge away.”—

The King walked forth by Leven side,
 His leesome thoughts were all of love ;
 There he beheld a palmer man,
 That watched his path amid the grove.

And, ah ! he told him such a tale
Of danger, brooking no delay !
It was of threatened Northern feud,
Of Athol's love to bonny Hay.

The King sent out a belted knight
To greet the gallant chief, and say,—
“ Lord Athol, thou wert aye the man
That stood by me in battle fray :

“ A hardier wight, or braver knight, ,
Ne'er conquered by his sovereign's side ;
And thee I'll trust, and only thee, .
To bring me home my lovely bride :

“ For I have courted Erol's maid,
And gained her heart right pleasantly ;
Be thou bedight in goodly gear,
My knight and bridesman thou shalt be.”

Lord Athol strode into his hall ;
It was too bounded for his grief .
Lord Athol strode into the field,
In proud resolve to seek relief.

He weighed it up, he weighed it down,
The circumstance and the degree ;
He found the King was blameless knight,
And sighed for woman's treachery.

“ Wo that my eye was ever turned
On piece of false and fickle clay !
Wo that my peace was ever set
Upon that floweret of a day !

“ O ! she could love, and she could smile !
And she could sigh, and weep withal !
But, ah ! that love of selfish wile
Could not withstand a coronal.

“ And she expects, that I will come
And whine, and talk of broken vow ;
And she expects that I will kneel
Beneath her pride and scornful brow.

“ But I will show that imp of pride,
Her hopes of triumph are but vain ;
And, though revenge is in my power,
How easily I can break the chain.”

The days rolled on. O, they were long !
Yet, still regretted, passed away ;
The nights went bye with weary pace,
O sleepless nights to lovely Hay !

For every hour she hoped to see
Lord Athol at her father's door ;
She longed to see the Highland clans,
The target, and the broad claymore.

No rescue came !—The day arriv'd,—
Oh ! cold, cold ran old Erol's blood !
There came a loud rap to the gate,
And at that gate Lord Athol stood,

With seven score clansmen him behind,
Well mounted, and in bright array ;
Old Erol ran into the hall,
Shouting, “ To arms, to arms, hurra !

“Haste, warder, to the northern tower,
And peal the gathering note amain,
Till every tree bawl forth the sound,
From Ila ford to Dunsinnane.”

O! loud, loud did the maiden laugh,
To see old Erol in the gin;
And, loud, loud, was the knock and call;
But none would let Lord Athol in.

He heaved the guard-stone from the earth,
With strength beyond the wizard's spell;
And dashed it on the iron gate,
Till bolts and bars in flinders fell.

Old Erol came into the court,
He saw that better might not be;
He touched his bonnet with his hand,
Aware of Athol's injury.

“Lord Athol, if thou'rt come to fight,
Trust me, thou shalt have routh of weir—
Lord Athol, if thou art come to feast,
There is no knight so welcome here.”

A frown hung on Lord Athol's brow;
He turned him round upon his heel—
“I come to bear the King his bride;
Here is his hand and royal seal.”

Old Erol looked the letter on,
He scarcely could believe his e'e;
“Our royal Liege is sore misled,
I will not yield the maid to thee.”

“ Then, by my faith, I must her take,
In spite of all that bars my way ;
I bear my order from my King,
Which, yet, I never did gainsay.”

He pulled his broadsword from his thigh,
It flickered like the meteor's ray ;
“ Lay on them, lads,” Lord Athol cried,
“ I long with such to have a fray.”

Clash went the swords along the van,
That onset might not be withstood ;
The Highland horse, they were so fierce,
They bathed their hooves in Lowland blood.

The battle's lost—the bride is won—
The pipes a merry strain resound ;
She weened it was a bold device,
And to the Highlands they were bound.

O ! never was a maiden's look
So fraught with wonder and dismay !
They did not turn to Ila ford,
But downward bore upon the Tay.

They plunged into the darksome wave,
O but the ford was deep and wide !
But they set their faces to the stream,
And steadily they stemmed the tide.

Away they rode by Almond ford,
And by the side of silver Earn ;
But where they went, or what was meant,
The bonny Hay had yet to learn.

And aye the bride had something wrong,
Her veil or scarf was discomposed ;
Her bridle twisted on the mane ;
A belt was broke, a band was loosed.

And then her fair and dainty foot
From out the golden stirrup fell,
And none but Athol might her near ;
But yet no look her doubts dispel.

The live-long day, nor sign of love,
Nor censure did his looks express ;
Oh, his was distant kindness all,
Attention and obsequiousness.

When they came in by fair Monteith,
She asked a henchman carelessly,
“ Whose land is this ?—Has Athol here
A castle, or a bastailie ?”

“ No, lady fair, these lands are held
By Comyn Glas of Barnygill ;
Lord Athol has no tower nor land
Besouth the brow of Birnam-hill.”

She turned her face back to the north,
That face grew blenched and pale as clay ;
And aye the clear and burning tear
Hung on the cheek of lovely Hay.

Lord Athol turned him round about,
“ Why does the tear stand in your eye ?
Say, are you weary of the way,
Or does your steed bear you too high ?

“ Or does the west wind blirt your cheek ?
 Or the sun fa’ on your bonny bree ? ”
 She hid her face within her veil,
 “ Canst thou such question ask at me ? ”

“ Beshrew my heart, if I can guess,
 When honours thus thy path belay ;—
 Minstrels, play up the music meet,
 And make our royal bride look gay.”

As they went down by Endrick side,
 They met our good King Gregory,
 Who came with all his gallant train,
 And welcomed them right courteously.

He kissed his fair and comely bride,
 And placed her on a chariot high ;
 “ Why does Lord Erol stay behind ?
 Why comes he not to give me joy ? ”

“ My royal liege,” Lord Athol said,
 “ It fits him not thy face to see ;
 I showed your order and the seal,
 But he would not yield the maid to me.

“ I broke his bolts and bars of steel,
 I beat his yeoman on the lea,
 I won his towers by dint of weir,
 And here I’ve brought her safe to thee.”

The king looked east, the king looked west,
 And asked the maid the truth to tell ;
 “ Sooth, my good lord, the tale is just,
 I nothing wot how it befel.”

King Gregory drew a long long breath,
 He pressed his brow, and stroked his beard ;
 " Now, by the rood," King Gregory said,
 " So strange a tale I never heard."

* * * * *

What ails our fair and comely bride,
 That thus she breathes the broken sigh ;
 That ever and anon she looks
 As if to meet some pitying eye ?

No pitying eye, alas ! is there ;
 Lord Athol jests and looks away ;
 True love is blighted in the bloom,
 And hope takes leave of bonny Hay.

The holy Abbot oped the book,
 The twain arose from royal seat ;
 The prayer was said, the question put,
 Her tongue refused the answer meet :

But aye she wept and sobbed aloud,
 To cheer and comfort her was none ;
 And aye she glanced to Athol's Lord
 With looks would pierce a heart of stone.

His heart was pierced—he deemed her wronged—
 But now regret could nought avail ;
 O, when her silken glove was drawn,
 He trembled like the aspin pale.

The king he seized her trembling hand,
 And raised it gently from her side,
 Then placed it in her lover's grasp,
 " Here, Athol, take thy bonny bride.

“ These are two hands will better fit,
 Now, Abbot, *here thy question try.*”
 The Abbot stared, and straight obeyed,
 Ah ! it was answered readily !

“ Then join them, sire, and bless the bond,
 I joy such lovers blest to see,
 The one respected sovereign’s will,
 The other parent’s high decree.”

Lord Athol kneeled and clasped his King,
 And shed the tears upon his knee ;
 But the fair bride hung round his neck,
 And kissed his lips in ecstasie.

“ Go with thy lover, bonny Hay,
 Thou well befit’st his manly side,
 And thou shalt have the fairest dower
 That ever went with Highland bride.

“ I ne’er saw such a lovely face,
 I never looked on form so fair,
 But a foolish thought rose in my breast,
 That Athol’s child might be my heir.

“ Go, my brave Douglas of the Dale,
 And bring your Madeline here to me ;
 I oft have marked her eagle eye—
 The Queen of Scotland she shall be.”

Old Douglas bowed and left the hall,
 How proudly waved his locks of gray !
 A sound was issuing from his breast,
 Laughing or crying none could say.

O such a double bridal feast,
 And such a time of joyful glee,
 And such a wise and worthy king,
 Dunbarton never more shall see.

THE SHEPHERD'S CALENDAR.

STORMS.

THESE constitute the various eras of the pastoral life. They are the red lines in the shepherd's manual—the remembrancers of years and ages that are past—the tablets of memory by which the ages of his children, the times of his ancestors, and the rise and downfall of families, are invariably ascertained. Even the progress of improvement in Scots farming can be traced traditionally from these, and the rent of a farm or estate given with precision, before and after such and such a storm, though the narrator be uncertain in what century the said notable storm happened. “Mar’s year,” and “that year the hielanders raide,” are but secondary mementos to *the year nine*, and *the year forty*—these stand in bloody capitals in the annals of the pastoral life, as well as many more that shall hereafter be mentioned.

The most dismal of all those on record is *the thirteen drifty days*. This extraordinary storm, as near as I have been able to trace, must have occurred in the year 1620. The traditional stories and pictures of desolation that remain of it, are the most dire imaginable; and the mentioning of the thirteen drifty days to an old shepherd, in a stormy winter night,

never fails to impress his mind with a sort of religious awe, and often sets him on his knees before that Being who alone can avert such another calamity.

It is said, that for thirteen days and nights the snow-drift never once abated—the ground was covered with frozen snow when it commenced, and during all that time the sheep never broke their fast. The cold was intense to a degree never before remembered; and about the fifth and sixth days of the storm, the young sheep began to fall into a sleepy and torpid state, and all that were so affected in the evening died over night. The intensity of the frost wind often cut them off when in that state quite instantaneously. About the ninth and tenth days, the shepherds began to build up huge semi-circular walls of their dead, in order to afford some shelter for the remainder of the living; but they availed but little, for about the same time they were frequently seen tearing at one another's wool with their teeth.

When the storm abated, on the fourteenth day from its commencement, there was on many a high-lying farm not a living sheep to be seen. Large mishapen walls of dead, surrounding a small prostrate flock likewise all dead, and frozen stiff in their lairs, were all that remained to cheer the forlorn shepherd and his master; and though on low-lying farms, where the snow was not so hard before, numbers of sheep weathered the storm, yet their constitutions received such a shock, that the greater part of them perished afterwards; and the final consequence was, that about nine-tenths of all the sheep in the south of Scotland were destroyed.

In the extensive pastoral district of Eskdale-moor, which maintains upwards of 20,000 sheep, it is said none were left alive, but forty young wedders on one farm, and five old ewes on another. The farm of Phaup remained without a stock and without a tenant for twenty years subsequent to the storm; at length, one very honest and liberal-minded man ven-

tured to take a lease of it, at the annual rent of *a grey cow and a pair of hose*. It is now rented at £500. An extensive glen in Tweedsmuir, belonging to Sir James Montgomery, became a common at that time, to which any man drove his flocks that pleased, and it continued so for nearly a century. On one of Sir Patrick Scott of Thirlestane's farms, that keeps upwards of 900 sheep, they all died save one black ewe, from which the farmer had high hopes of preserving a breed; but some unlucky dogs, that were all laid idle for want of sheep to run at, fell upon this poor solitary remnant of a good stock, and chased her into the lake, where she was drowned. When word of this was brought to John Scott the farmer, commonly called gouffin' Jock, he is reported to have expressed himself as follows: "Ochon, ochon! an' is that the gate o't?—a black beginning maks aye a black end." Then taking down an old rusty sword, he added, "Come thou away, my auld frien', thou an' I maun e'en stock Bourhope-law ance mair. Bessy, my dow, how gaes the auld sang?"

There's walth o' kye i' bonny Braidlees;
 There's walth o' yowes i' Tine;
 There's walth o' gear i' Gowanburn—
 An' thae shall a' be thine."

It is a pity that tradition has not preserved any thing farther of the history of gouffin' Jock than this one saying.

The next memorable event of this nature is *the blast o' March*, which happened on the 24th day of that month, in the year 16—, on a Monday's ^{morning} morning; and though it lasted only for one forenoon, it was calculated to have destroyed upwards of a thousand scores of sheep, as well as a number of shepherds. There is one anecdote of this storm that is worthy of being preserved, as it shows with how much attention shepherds, as well as sailors, should observe the appearances of the sky. The Sunday evening before was so warm, that the

They went home from church barefoot, and the young men threw off their plaids and coats and carried them over their shoulders. A large group of these youngers, going home from the church of Yarrow, equipped in this manner, chanced to pass by an old shepherd on the farm of Newhouse, named Walter Blake, who had all his sheep gathered into the side of a wood. They asked Wattie, who was a very religious man, what could have induced him to gather his sheep on the Sabbath-day? He answered, that he had seen an ill-hued weather-gaw that morning, and was afraid it was going to be a drift. They were so much amused at Wattie's apprehensions, that they clapped their hands, and laughed at him, and one pert girl cried, "Aye, fie tak' care, Wattie; I wadna say but it may be thrapple deep or the morn." Another asked, "if he wasna rather feared for the sun burning the een out o' their heads?" and a third, "if he didna keep a correspondence wi' the thieves, an' kend they were to ride that night." Wattie was obliged to bear all this, for the evening was fine beyond any thing generally seen at that season, and only said to them at parting, "Weel, weel, callans, time will try a'; let him laugh that wins; but slacks will be sleek, a hogg for the howking; we'll a' get horns to tout on the morn." The saying grew proverbial; but Wattie was the only man who saved the whole of his flock in that country.

The years 1769—40, and 72, were all likewise notable years for severity, and for the losses sustained among the flocks of sheep. In the latter, the snow lay from the middle of December until the middle of April, and all the time hard frozen. Partial thaws always kept the farmer's hopes of relief alive, and thus prevented him from removing his sheep to a lower situation, till at length they grew so weak that they could not be removed. There has not been such a general loss in the days of any man living as in that year. It is by these years

" subsequent hard winters have been measured, and,
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late by that of 1795 ; and when the balance turns out in favour of the calculator, there is always a degree of thankfulness expressed, as well as a composed submission to the awards of Divine Providence. The daily feeling naturally impressed on the shepherd's mind, that all his comforts are so entirely in the hand of Him that rules the elements, contributes not a little to that firm spirit of devotion for which the Scottish shepherd is so distinguished. I know of no scene so impressive, as that of a family sequestered in a lone glen during the time of a winter storm ; and where is the glen in the kingdom that wants such a habitation ? There they are left to the protection of Heaven, and they know and feel it. Throughout all the wild vicissitudes of nature they have no hope of assistance from man, but are conversant with the Almighty alone. Before retiring to rest, the shepherd uniformly goes out to examine the state of the weather, and makes his report to the little dependant group within—nothing is to be seen but the conflict of the elements, nor heard but the raving of the storm—then they all kneel around him, while he recommends them to the protection of Heaven ; and though their little hymn of praise can scarcely be heard even by themselves, as it mixes with the roar of the tempest, they never fail to rise from their devotions with their spirits cheered and their confidence renewed, and go to sleep with an exaltation of mind of which kings and conquerors have no share. Often have I been a sharer in such scenes ; and never, even in my youngest years, without having my heart deeply impressed by the circumstances. There is a sublimity in the very idea. There we lived, as it were, inmates of the cloud and the storm ; but we stood in a relationship to the Ruler of them, that neither time nor eternity could ever cancel. Wo to him that would weaken the bonds with which true Christianity connects us with Heaven and with each other.

But of all the storms that ever Scotland witnessed, that the

hope ever will again behold, there is none of them that can once be compared with the memorable 24th of January 1794, which fell with such peculiar violence on that division of the south of Scotland that lies between Crawford-muir and the border. In that bounds there were seventeen shepherds perished, and upwards of thirty carried home insensible, who afterwards recovered; but the number of sheep that were lost far outwent any possibility of calculation. One farmer alone, Mr Thomas Beattie, lost seventy-two scores for his own share—and many others, in the same quarter, from thirty to forty scores each. Whole flocks were overwhelmed with snow, and no one ever knew where they were till the snow was dissolved, that they were all found dead. I myself witnessed one particular instance of this on the farm of Thickside: there were twelve scores of excellent ewes, all one age, that were missing there all the time that the snow lay, which was only a week, and no traces of them could be found; when the snow went away, they were discovered all lying dead, with their heads one way, as if a flock of sheep had dropped dead going from the washing. Many hundreds were driven into waters, burns, and lakes, by the violence of the storm, where they were buried or frozen up, and these the flood carried away, so that they were never seen or found by the owners at all. The following anecdote somewhat illustrates the confusion and devastation that it bred in the country.—The greater part of the rivers on which the storm was most deadly, run into the Solway Frith, on which there is a place called *the Beds of Esk*, where the tide throws out, and leaves whatsoever is carried into it by the river. When the flood after the storm subsided, there were found on that place, and the shores adjacent, 1840 sheep, nine black cattle, three horses, two men, one woman, forty-five dogs, and one hundred and eighty hares, besides a number of meaner animals.

To relate all the particular scenes of distress that occurred during this tremendous hurricane is impossible—a volume would not contain them. I shall, therefore, in order to give a true picture of the storm, merely relate what I saw, and shall in nothing exaggerate. But before doing this, I must mention a circumstance, curious in its nature, and connected with others that afterwards occurred.

Sometime previous to that, a few young shepherds (of whom I was one, and the youngest, though not the least ambitious of the number), had formed themselves into a sort of literary society, that met periodically, at one or other of the houses of its members, where each read an essay on a subject previously given out; and after that, every essay was minutely investigated and criticised. We met in the evening, and continued our important discussions all night. Friday, the 23d of January, was the day appointed for one of these meetings, and it was to be held at Entertrony, a wild and remote shieling, at the very sources of the Ettrick, and now occupied by my own brother. I had the honour of having been named as preses—so, leaving the charge of my flock with my master, off I set from Blackhouse, on Thursday, a very ill day, with a flaming bombastical essay in my pocket, and my tongue trained to many wise and profound remarks, to attend this extraordinary meeting, though the place lay at the distance of twenty miles, over the wildest hills in the kingdom, and the time the depth of winter. I remained that night with my parents at Ettrick-house, and next day again set out on my journey. I had not, however, proceeded far, before I perceived, or thought I perceived, symptoms of an approaching storm, and that of no ordinary nature. I remember the day well: the wind, which was rough on the preceding day, had subsided into a dead calm; there was a slight fall of snow, which descended in small thin flakes, that seemed to hover and reel in the air, as if uncertain whether to go upward or

downward—the hills were covered down to the middle in deep folds of rime, or frost-fog—in the cloughs that was dark, dense, and seemed as if it were heaped and crushed together—but on the brows of the hills it had a pale and fleecy appearance, and, altogether, I never beheld a day of such gloomy aspect. A thought now began to intrude itself on me, though I strove all that I could to get quit of it, that it would be a wise course in me to return home to my sheep. Inclination urged me on, and I tried to bring reason to her aid, by saying to myself, “I have no reason in the world to be afraid of my sheep, my master took the charge of them cheerfully, there is not a better shepherd in the kingdom, and I cannot doubt his concern in having them right.” All would not do: I stood still and contemplated the day, and the more closely I examined it, the more was I impressed that some mischief was a-brewing; so, with a heavy heart, I turned on my heel, and made the best of my way back the road I came; my elaborate essay, and all my wise observations, had come to nothing.

On my way home, I called at a place named the Hope-house, to see a maternal uncle, whom I loved; he was angry when he saw me, and said it was not like a prudent lad to be running up and down the country in such weather, and at such a season; and urged me to make haste home, for it would be a drift before the morn. He accompanied me to the top of the height called the Black Gate-head, and on parting, he shook his head, and said, “Ah! it is a dangerous looking day! In troth I’m amaisht fear’d to look at it;” I said I would not mind it, if any one knew from what quarter the storm would arise; but we might, in all likelihood, gather our sheep to the place where they would be most exposed to danger. He bade me keep a good look out all the way home, and wherever I observed the first opening through the rime, to be assured the wind would rise

directly from that point. I did as he desired me, but the clouds continued close set all around, till the fall of evening; and as the snow had been accumulating all day, so as to render walking very unfuthersome, it was that time before I reached home. The first thing I did was to go to my master and inquire where he had left my sheep—he told me—but though I had always the most perfect confidence in his experience, I was not pleased with what he had done—he had left a part of them far too high out on the hills, and the rest were not where I wanted them, and I told him so: he said he had done all for the best, but if there appeared to be any danger, if I would call him up in the morning, he would assist me. We had two beautiful servant girls, and with them I sat chattering till past eleven o'clock, and then I went down to the old tower. What could have taken me to that ruinous habitation of the Black Dangles at that untimely hour, I cannot recollect, but it certainly must have been from a supposition that one of the girls would follow me, or else that I would see a hare—both very unlikely events to have taken place on such a night. However, certain it is, that there I was at midnight, and it was while standing on the top of the staircase turret, that I first beheld a bright bore through the clouds, towards the north, which reminded me of my uncle's apophthegm. But at the same time a smart thaw had commenced, and the breeze seemed to be rising from the south, so that I laughed in my heart at his sage rule, and accounted it quite absurd. Short was the time till awful experience told me how true it was.

I then went to my bed in the byre loft, where I slept with a neighbour shepherd, named Borthwick; but though fatigued with walking through the snow, I could not close an eye, so that I heard the first burst of the storm, which commenced between one and two, with a fury that no one can conceive who does not remember of it. Besides, the place where I lived being

exposed to two or three gathered winds, as they are called by shepherds, the storm raged there with redoubled ferocity. It began all at once, with such a tremendous roar, that I imagined it was a peal of thunder, until I felt the house trembling to its foundation. In a few minutes I went and thrust my naked arm through a hole in the roof, in order, if possible, to ascertain what was going on without, for not a ray of light could I see. I could not then, nor can I yet, express my astonishment. So completely was the air overloaded with falling and driving snow, that but for the force of the wind, I felt as if I had thrust my arm into a wreath of snow. I deemed it a judgment sent from Heaven upon us, and lay down again in my bed, trembling with agitation. I lay still for about an hour, in hopes that it might prove only a temporary hurricane; but, hearing no abatement of its fury, I awakened Borthwick, and bade him get up, for it was come on such a night or morning, as never blew from the heavens. He was not long in obeying, for as soon as he heard the turmoil, he started from his bed, and in one minute, throwing on his clothes, he hasted down the ladder, and opened the door, where he stood for a good while, uttering exclamations of astonishment. The door where he stood was not above fourteen yards from the door of the dwelling-house, but a wreath was already amassed between them, as high as the walls of the house—and in trying to get round or through this, Borthwick lost himself, and could neither find the house nor his way back to the byre, and about six minutes after, I heard him calling my name, in a shrill desperate tone of voice, at which I could not refrain from laughing immoderately, notwithstanding the dismal prospect that lay before us; for I heard, from his cries, where he was. He had tried to make his way over the top of a large dunghill, but going to the wrong side, had fallen over, and wrestled long among snow, quite over the head. I did not think proper to move to his assistance, but lay still, and short-

ly after, heard him shouting at the kitchen door for instant admittance; still I kept my bed for about three quarters of an hour longer; and then, on reaching the house with much difficulty, found our master, the ploughman, Borthwick, and the two servant maids, sitting round the kitchen fire, with looks of dismay, I may almost say despair. We all agreed at once, that the sooner we were able to reach the sheep, the better chance we had to save a remnant; and as there were eight hundred excellent ewes, all in one lot, but a long way distant, and the most valuable lot of any on the farm, we resolved to make a bold effort to reach them. Our master made family worship, a duty he never neglected; but that morning, the manner in which we manifested our trust and confidence in Heaven, was particularly affecting. We took our breakfast—stuffed our pockets with bread and cheese—sewed our plaids around us—tied down our hats with napkins coming below our chins—and each taking a strong staff in his hand, we set out on the attempt.

No sooner was the door closed behind us than we lost sight of each other—seeing there was none—it was impossible for a man to see his hand held up before him, and it was still two hours till day. We had no means of keeping together but by following to one another's voices, nor of working our way save by groping with our staves before us. It soon appeared to me a hopeless concern, for, ere ever we got clear of the houses and haystacks, we had to roll ourselves over two or three wreaths which it was impossible to wade through; and all the while the wind and drift were so violent, that every three or four minutes we were obliged to hold our faces down between our knees to recover our breath.

We soon got into an eddying wind that was altogether insufferable, and, at the same time, we were struggling among snow so deep, that our progress in the way we purposed going was indeed very equivocal, for we had, by this time, lost all

idea of east, west, north, or south. Still we were as busy as men determined on a business could be, and persevered on we knew not whither, sometimes rolling over the snow, and sometimes weltering in it to the chin. The following instance of our successful exertions marks our progress to a tittle. There was an inclosure around the house to the westward, which we denominated *the park*, as is customary in Scotland. When we went away, we calculated that it was two hours until day—the park did not extend above 300 yards—and we were still engaged in that *park* when day light appeared.

When we got free of the park, we also got free of the eddy of the wind—it was now straight in our faces—we went in a line before each other, and changed places every three or four minutes, and at length, after great fatigue, we reached a long ridge of a hill, where the snow was thinner, having been blown off it by the force of the wind, and by this time we had hopes of reaching within a short space of the ewes, which were still a mile and a half distant. Our master had taken the lead; I was next him, and soon began to suspect, from the depth of the snow, that he was leading us quite wrong, but as we always trusted implicitly to him that was foremost for the time, I said nothing for a good while, until satisfied that we were going in a direction very nearly right opposite to that we intended. I then tried to expostulate with him, but he did not seem to understand what I said, and, on getting a glimpse of his countenance, I perceived that it was quite altered. Not to alarm the others, nor even himself, I said I was becoming terribly fatigued, and proposed that we should lean on the snow and take each a mouthful of whisky (for I had brought a small bottle in my pocket for fear of the worst), and a bite of bread and cheese. This was unanimously agreed to, and I noted that he swallowed the spirits rather eagerly, a thing not usual with him, and when he tried to eat, it was long before he could swallow any thing. I was convinced that he would

fail altogether, but, as it would have been easier to have got him to the shepherd's house before than home again, I made no proposal for him to return. On the contrary, I said if they would trust themselves entirely to me, I would engage to lead them to the ewes without going a foot out of the way—the other two agreed to it, and acknowledged that they knew not where they were, but he never opened his mouth, nor did he speak a word for two hours thereafter. It had only been a temporary exhaustion, however; for after that he recovered, and wrought till night as well as any of us, though he never could recollect a single circumstance that occurred during that part of our way, nor a word that was said, nor of having got any refreshment whatever.

At half an hour after ten, we reached the flock, and just in time to save them; but before that, both Borthwick and the ploughman had lost their hats, notwithstanding all their precautions; and to impede us still farther, I went inadvertently over a precipice, and going down head foremost, between the scaur and the snow, found it impossible to extricate myself; for the more I struggled, I went the deeper. For all our troubles, I heard Borthwick above convulsed with laughter; he thought he had got the affair of the dunghill paid back. By holding by one another, and letting down a plaid to me, they hauled me up, but I was terribly incommoded by snow that had got inside my clothes.

The ewes were standing in a close body; one half of them were covered over with snow to the depth of ten feet, the rest were jammed against a brae. We knew not what to do for spades to dig them out; but, to our agreeable astonishment, when those before were removed, they had been so close pent together as to be all touching one another, and they wallowed out from below the snow after their neighbours in a body. If the snow-wreath had not broke, and crumbled down upon a few that were hindmōst, we should have got them all out with-

out putting a hand to them. This was effecting a good deal more than I or any of the party expected a few hours before; there were 100 ewes in another place near by, but of these we could only get out a very few, and lost all hopes of saving the rest.

It was now wearing towards mid-day, and there were occasionally short intervals in which we could see about us for perhaps a score of yards; but we got only one momentary glance of the hills around us all that day. I grew quite impatient to be at my own charge, and leaving the rest, I went away to them by myself, that is, I went to the division that was left far out on the hills, while our master and the ploughman volunteered to rescue those that were down on the lower ground. I found mine in miserable circumstances, but making all possible exertion, I got out about one half of them, which I left in a place of safety, and made towards home, for it was beginning to grow dark, and the storm was again raging, without any mitigation, in all its darkness and deformity. I was not the least afraid of losing my way, for I knew all the declivities of the hills so well, that I could have come home with my eyes bound up, and, indeed, long ere I got home, they were of no use to me. I was terrified for the water (Douglas Burn), for in the morning it was flooded and gorged up with snow in a dreadful manner, and I judged that it would be quite impassable. At length I came to a place where I thought the water should be, and fell a boring and groping for it with my long staff. No, I could find no water, and began to dread, that for all my accuracy I had gone wrong. I was greatly astonished, and, standing still to consider, I looked up towards Heaven, I shall not say for what cause, and to my utter amazement thought I beheld trees over my head flourishing abroad over the whole sky. I never had seen such an optical delusion before; it was so like enchantment, that I knew not what to think, but dreaded that some extraordinary thing was coming over me, and that I was deprived of my right

senses. I remember I thought the storm was a great judgment sent on us for our sins, and that this strange phantasy was connected with it, 'an illusion effected by evil spirits. I stood a good while in this painful trance ; at length, on making a bold exertion to escape from the fairy vision, I came all at once in contact with the old tower. Never in my life did I experience such a relief ; I was not only all at once freed from the fairies, but from the dangers of the gorged river. I had come over it on some mountain of snow, I knew not how nor where, nor do I know to this day. So that, after all, they weretrees that I saw, and trees of no great magnitude neither ; but their appearance to my eyes it is impossible to describe. I thought they flourished abroad, not for miles, but for hundreds of miles, to the utmost verges of the visible heavens. Such a day and such a night may the eye of a shepherd never again behold.

CHAP. II.

“ That night, a child might understand,
The Deil had business on his hand.”

ON reaching home, I found our women folk sitting in woful plight. It is well known how wonderfully acute they generally are, either at raising up imaginary evils, or magnifying those that exist ; and our's had made out a theory so fraught with misery and distress, that the poor things were quite overwhelmed with grief. “ There were none of us ever to see the house again *in life*. There was no possibility of the thing happening, all circumstances considered. There was not a sheep in the country to be saved, nor a single shepherd left alive—nothing but *women* ! and there they were left, three

poor helpless creatures, and the men lying dead out among the snow, and none to bring them home. Lord help them, what was to become of them !” They perfectly agreed in all this ; there was no dissenting voice ; and their prospects still continuing to darken with the fall of night, they had no other resource left them, long before my arrival, but to lift up their voices and weep. The group consisted of a young lady, our master’s niece, and two servant girls, all of the same age, and beautiful as three spring days, every one of which are mild and sweet, but differ only a little in brightness. No sooner had I entered, than every tongue and every hand was put in motion, the former to pour forth queries faster than six tongues of men could answer them with any degree of precision, and the latter to rid me of the incumbrances of snow and ice with which I was loaded. One slit up the sewing of my frozen plaid, another brushed the icicles from my locks, and a third unloosed my clotted snow boots ; we all arrived within a few minutes of each other, and all shared the same kind offices, and heard the same kind inquiries, and long string of perplexities narrated ; even our dogs shared of their caresses and ready assistance in ridding them of the frozen snow, and the dear consistent creatures were six times happier than if no storm or danger had existed. Let no one suppose that, even amid toils and perils, the shepherd’s life is destitute of enjoyment.

Borthwick had found his way home without losing his aim in the least. I had deviated but little, save that I lost the river, and remained a short time in the country of the fairies ; but the other two had a hard struggle for life. They went off, as I said formerly, in search of seventeen ewes of my flock that had been left in a place not far from the house, but being unable to find one of them, in searching for these, they lost themselves, while it was yet early in the afternoon. They supposed that they had gone by the house

very near to it, for they had toiled till dark among deep snow in the burn below; and if John Burnet, a neighbouring shepherd, had not heard them calling, and found and conducted them home, it would have stood hard with them indeed, for none of us would have looked for them in that direction. They were both very much exhausted, and the goodman could not speak above his breath that night.

Next morning the sky was clear, but a cold intemperate wind still blew from the north. The face of the country was entirely altered. The form of every hill was changed, and new mountains leaned over every valley. All traces of burns, rivers, and lakes, were obliterated, for the frost had been commensurate with the storm, and such as had never been witnessed in Scotland. Some registers that I have seen, place this storm on the 24th of December, a month too early, but that day was one of the finest winter days I ever saw.

There having been 340 of my flock that had never been found at all during the preceding day, as soon as the morning dawned we set all out to look after them. It was a hideous looking scene—no one could cast his eyes around him and entertain any conception of sheep being saved. It was one picture of desolation. There is a deep glen lies between Blackhouse and Dryhope, called the Hawkshaw Cleuch, which is full of trees. There was not the top of one of them to be seen. This may convey some idea how the country looked; and no one can suspect that I would state circumstances otherwise than they were, when there is so many living that could confute me.

When we came to the ground where these sheep should have been, there was not one of them above the snow. Here and there, at a great distance from each other, we could perceive the head or horns of stragglers appearing, and ~~we~~ were easily got out; but when we had collected these few, we could find no more. They had been all lying abroad

in a scattered state when the storm came on, and were covered over just as they had been lying. It was on a kind of slanting ground that lay half beneath the wind, and the snow was uniformly from six to eight feet deep. Under this the hogs were lying scattered over at least 100 acres of heathery ground. It was a very ill looking concern. We went about boring with our long poles, and often did not find one hog in a quarter of an hour. But at length a white shaggy colley, named Sparkie, that belonged to the cow-herd boy, seemed to have comprehended something of our perplexity, for we observed him plying and scraping in the snow with great violence, and always looking over his shoulder to us. On going to the spot, we found that he had marked straight above a sheep. From that he flew to another, and so on to another, as fast as we could dig them out, and ten times faster, for he sometimes had twenty or thirty holes marked before hand.

We got out three hundred of that division before night, and about half as many on the other parts of the farm, in addition to those we had rescued the day before; and the greater part of these would have been lost had it not been for the voluntary exertions of Sparkie. Before the snow went away (which lay only eight days) we had got every sheep on the farm out, either dead or alive, except four; and that these were not found was not Sparkie's blame, for though they were buried below a mountain of snow at least fifty feet deep, he had again and again marked on the top of it above them. The sheep were all living when we found them, but those that were buried in the snow to a certain depth, being, I suppose, in a warm, half suffocated state, though on being taken out they bounded away like roes, yet the sudden change of atmosphere instantly paralyzed them, and they fell down deprived of all power in their limbs. We had great numbers of these to carry home and feed with the hand, but others

that were very deep buried, died outright in a few minutes. We did not however lose above sixty in all, but I am certain Sparkie saved us at least two hundred.

We were for several days utterly ignorant how affairs stood with the country around us, all communication between farms being cut off, at least all communication with such a wild place as that in which I lived; but John Burnet, a neighbouring shepherd on another farm, was remarkably good at picking up the rumours that were afloat in the country, which he delighted to circulate without abatement. Many people tell their stories by halves, and in a manner so cold and indifferent, that the purport can scarcely be discerned, and if it is, cannot be believed; but that was not the case with John; he gave them with *interest*, and we were very much indebted to him for the intelligence that we daily received that week; for no sooner was the first brunt of the tempest got over, than John made a point of going off at a tangent every day, to learn and bring us word what was going on. The accounts were most dismal; the country was a charnel-house. The first day he brought us tidings of the loss of thousands of sheep, and likewise of the death of Robert Armstrong, a neighbour shepherd, one whom we all well knew, he having but lately left the Blackhouse to herd on another farm. He died not above three hundred paces from a farm-house, while at the same time it was known to them all that he was there. His companion left him at a dike-side, and went in to procure assistance; yet, nigh as it was, they could not reach him, though they attempted it again and again; and at length they were obliged to return, and suffer him to perish at the side of the dike. There were three of my own intimate acquaintances perished that night. There was another shepherd named Watt, the circumstances of whose death were peculiarly affecting. He had been to see his sweetheart on the night before, with whom he had

finally agreed and settled every thing about their marriage; but it so happened, in the inscrutable awards of Providence, that at the very time when the banns of his marriage were proclaimed in the church of Moffat, his companions were carrying him home a corpse from the hill.

It may not be amiss here to remark, that it was a received opinion all over the country, that sundry lives were lost, and a great many more endangered, by the administering of ardent spirits to the sufferers while in a state of exhaustion. It was a practice against which I entered my vehement protest, nevertheless the voice of the multitude should never be disregarded. A little bread and sweet milk, or even a little bread and cold water, it was said, proved a much safer restorative in the fields. There is no denying, that there were some who took a glass of spirits that night that never spoke another word, even though they were continuing to walk and converse when their friends found them.

On the other hand, there was one woman who left her children, and followed her husband's dog, who brought her to his master lying in a state of insensibility. He had fallen down bareheaded among the snow, and was all covered over, save one corner of his plaid. She had nothing better to take with her, when she set out, than a bottle of sweet milk and a little oatmeal cake, and yet, with the help of these, she so far recruited his spirits as to get him safe home, though not without long and active perseverance. She took two little vials with her, and in these she heated the milk in her bosom. That man would not be disposed to laugh at the silliness of the fair sex for some time.

It is perfectly unaccountable how easily people died that night. The frost must certainly have been prodigious; so intense as to have seized momentarily on the vitals of those that overheated themselves by wading and toiling too impatiently among the snow, a thing that is very aptly done,

I have conversed with five or six that were carried home in a state of insensibility that night, who never would again have moved from the spot where they lay, and were only brought to life by rubbing and warm applications ; and they uniformly declared, that they felt no kind of pain or debility, farther than an irresistible desire to sleep. Many fell down while walking and speaking, in a sleep so sound as to resemble torpidity ; and there is little doubt that those who perished slept away in the same manner. I knew a man well, whose name was Andrew Murray, that perished in the snow on Minchmoor ; and he had taken it so deliberately, that he had buttoned his coat and folded his plaid, which he had laid beneath his head for a bolster.

But it is now time to return to my notable literary society. In spite of the hideous appearances that presented themselves, the fellows actually met, all save myself, in that solitary shieling before mentioned. It is easy to conceive how they were confounded and taken by surprise, when the storm burst forth on them in the middle of the night, while they were in the heat of sublime disputation. There can be little doubt that there was part of loss sustained in their respective flocks, by reason of that meeting ; but this was nothing, compared with the obloquy to which they were subjected on another account, and one which will scarcely be believed, even though the most part of the members be yet alive to bear testimony to it.

The storm was altogether an unusual convulsion of nature. Nothing like it had ever been seen or heard of among us before ; and it was enough of itself to arouse every spark of superstition that lingered among these mountains. It did so. It was universally viewed as a judgment sent by God for the punishment of some heinous offence, but what that offence was, could not for a while be ascertained ; but when it came out, that so many men had been assembled in a lone

unfrequented place, and busily engaged in some mysterious work at the very instant that the blast came on, no doubts were entertained that all had not been right there, and that some horrible rite, or correspondence with the powers of darkness, had been going on. It so happened, too, that this shieling of Entertrony was situated in the very vortex of the storm; the devastations made by it extended all around that to a certain extent, and no farther on any one quarter than another. This was easily and soon remarked; and, upon the whole, the first view of the matter had rather an equivocal appearance to those around who had suffered so severely by it.

But still as the rumour grew, the certainty of the event gained ground—new corroborative circumstances were every day divulged, till the whole district was in an uproar, and several of the members began to meditate a speedy retreat from the country; some of them, I know, would have fled; if it had not been for the advice of the late worthy and judicious Mr Bryden of Crosslee. The first intimation that I had of it was from my friend John Burnet, who gave it me with his accustomed energy and full assurance. He came over one evening, and I saw by his face he had some great news. I think I remember, as I well may, every word that past between us on the subject.

“Weel chap,” said he to me, “we hae fund out what has been the cause of a’ this mischief now.”

“What do you mean, John?”

“What do I mean?—It seems that a great squad o’ birkies that ye are conneckit wi’, had met that night at the heid’s house o’ Everphaup, an’ had raised the deil amang them.”

Every countenance in the kitchen changed; the women gazed at John, and then at me, and their lips grew white. These kind of feelings are infectious, people may say what

they will; fear begets fear as naturally as light springs from reflection. I reasoned stoutly at first against the veracity of the report, observing, that it was utter absurdity, and a shame and disgrace for the country to cherish such a ridiculous lie.

“Lie!” said John, “it’s nae lie; they had him up amang them like a great rough dog at the very time that the tempest began, and were glad to draw cuts, and gie him ane o’ their number to get quit o’ him again.” Lord, how every hair of my head, and inch of my frame crept at hearing this sentence; for I had a dearly loved brother who was of the number, several full cousins and intimate acquaintances; indeed, I looked upon the whole fraternity as my brethren, and considered myself involved in all their transactions. I could say no more in defence of the society’s proceedings; for, to tell the truth, though I am ashamed to acknowledge it, I suspected that the allegation might be too true.

“Has the deil actually ta’en awa ane o’ them bodily?” said Jean. “He has that,” returned John, “an’ it’s thought the skaith wadna hae been grit, had he ta’en twa or three mae o’ them. Base villains! that the hale country should hae to suffer for their pranks! But, however, the law’s to tak its course on them, an’ they’ll find, ere a’ the play be played, that he has need of a lang spoon that sups wi’ the deil.”

The next day John brought us word, that it was *only* the servant maid that the *ill thief* had ta’en away; and the next again, that it was actually Bryden of Glenkerry; but, finally, he was obliged to inform us, “That a’ was *exactly* true, as it was first tauld, but *only* that Jamie Bryden, *after* being a-wanting for some days, had casten up again.”

There has been nothing since that time that has caused such a ferment in the country—nought else could be talked of; and grievous was the blame attached to those who had

the temerity to raise up the devil to waste the land. If the effects produced by the Chaldee Manuscript had not been fresh in the minds of the present generation, they could have no right conception of the rancour that prevailed against these few individuals; but the two scenes greatly resembled each other, for in that case, as well as the latter one, legal proceedings, it is said, were meditated, and attempted; but lucky it was for the shepherds that they agreed to no reference, for such were the feelings of the country, and the opprobrium in which the act was held, that it is likely it would have fared very ill with them;—at all events, it would have required an arbiter of some decision and uprightness to have dared to oppose them. Two men were sent to come to the house as by chance, and endeavour to learn from the shepherd, and particularly from the servant-maid, what grounds there were for inflicting legal punishments; but before that happened I had the good luck to hear her examined myself, and that in a way by which all suspicions were put to rest, and simplicity and truth left to war with superstition alone. I deemed it very curious at the time, and shall give it verbatim as nearly as I can recollect.

Being all impatience to learn particulars, as soon as the waters abated, so as to become fordable, I hasted over to Ettrick, and the day being fine, I found numbers of people astir on the same errand with myself,—the valley was moving with people, gathered in from the glens around, to hear and relate the dangers and difficulties that were just overpast. Among others, the identical girl who served with the shepherd in whose house the scene of the meeting took place, had come down to Ettrick school-house to see her parents. Her name was Mary Beattie, a beautiful sprightly lass, about twenty years of age; and if the devil had taken her in preference to any one of the shepherds, his good taste could

scarcely have been disputed. The first person I met was my friend, the late Mr James Anderson, who was as anxious to hear what had passed at the meeting as I was, so we two contrived a scheme whereby we thought we would hear every thing from the girl's own mouth.

We sent word to the school-house for Mary, to call at my father's house on her return up the water, as there was a parcel to go to Phawhope. She came accordingly, and when we saw her approaching, we went into a little sleeping apartment, where we could hear every thing that passed, leaving directions with my mother how to manage the affair. My mother herself was in perfect horrors about the business, and believed it all; as for my father, he did not say much either the one way or the other, but bit his lip, and remarked, that "fo'k would find it was an ill thing to ha'e to do wi' *the enemy*."

My mother would have managed extremely well, had her own early prejudices in favour of the doctrine of all kinds of apparitions not got the better of her. She was very kind to the girl, and talked with her about the storm, and the events that had occurred, till she brought the subject of the meeting forward herself, on which the following dialogue commenced:—

"But dear Mary, my woman, what were the chiefs a' met about that night?"

"O, they were just gaun through their papers an' arguing."

"Arguing! what were they arguing about?"

"I have often thought about it sin' syne, but really I canna tell precisely what they were arguing about."

"Were you wi' them a' the time?"

"Yes, a' the time, but the wee while I was milkin' the cow."

"An' did they never bid you gang out?"

“ Oo no ; they never heedit whether I gaed out or in.”

“ Its queer that ye canna mind 3ught *ava* ;—can ye no tell me ae word that ye heard them say ?”

—“ I heard them sayin’ something about the fitness o’ things.”

“ Aye, that was a braw subject for them ! But, Mary, did ye no hear them sayin nae ill words ?”

“ No.”

“ Did ye no hear them speaking naething about the deil ?”

“ Very little.”

“ What were they saying about *him* ?”

“ I thought I aince heard Jamie Fletcher saying there was nae deil *ava*.”

“ Ah ! the unwordy rascal ! How durst he for the life o’ him ! I wonder he didna think shame.”

“ I fear aye he’s something regardless, Jamie.”

“ I hope nane that belongs to me will ever join him in sic wickedness ! But tell me, Mary, my woman, did ye no see nor hear naething uncanny about the house yoursel’ that night ?”

“ There was something like a plover cried twice i’ the peat-neuk, in at the side o’ Will’s bed.”

“ A plover ! His presence be about us ! There was never a plover at this time o’ the year. And in the house too ! Ah, Mary, I’m feared and concerned about that night’s wark ! What thought ye it was that cried ?”

“ I didna ken what it was, it cried just like a plover.”

“ Did the callans look as they were fear’d when they heard it ?”

“ They lookit gayan’ queer.”

“ What did they say ?”

“ Ane cried, ‘ What is that ?’ an’ another said, ‘ What can it mean.’ ‘ Hout,’ quo Jamie Fletcher, ‘ its just some bit stray bird that has lost itsel.’ ‘ I’dinna ken,’ quo your Will, ‘ I dinna like it unco weel.’

“ Think ye, did nane o’ the rest see any thing ? ”

“ I believe there was something seen.”

“ What was’t ? ” (in a half whisper with manifest alarm.)

“ When Will gaed out to try if he could gang to the sheep, he met wi’ a great big rough dog, that had very near worn him into a lin in the water.”

My mother was now deeply affected, and after two or three smothered exclamations, she fell a whispering ; the other followed her example, and shortly after they rose and went out, leaving my friend and me very little wiser than we were, for we had heard both these incidents before with little variation. I accompanied Mary to Phawhope, and met with my brother, who soon convinced me of the falsehood and absurdity of the whole report ; but I was grieved to find him so much cast down and distressed about it. None of them durst well shew their faces at either kirk or market for a whole year, and more. The weather continuing fine, we two went together and perambulated Eskdale moor, visiting the principal scenes of carnage among the flocks, where we saw multitudes of men skinning and burying whole droves of sheep, taking with them only the skins and tallow.

I shall now conclude this long account of the storm, and its consequences, by an extract from a poet for whose works I always feel disposed to have a great partiality ; and whoever reads the above will not doubt on what incident the description is founded, nor yet deem it greatly overcharged.

* * * * *

“ Who was it reared these whelming waves ?

Who scalp’d the brows of old Cairn Gorm,

And scoop’d these ever-yawning caves ?

’Twas I, the Spirit of the Storm !

He waved his sceptre north away,
 The arctic ring was rift asunder;
 And through the heaven the startling bray
 Burst louder than the loudest thunder.

The feathery clouds, condensed and furled,
 In columns swept the quaking glen;
 Destruction down the dale was hurled,
 O'er bleating flocks and wondering men.

The Grampians groan'd beneath the storm;
 New mountains o'er the corrie lean'd;
 Ben Nevis shook his shaggy form,
 And wonder'd what his Sovereign mean'd.

Even far on Yarrow's fairy dale,
 The shepherd paused in dumb dismay;
 And cries of spirits in the gale
 Lured many a pitying hind away.

The Lowthers felt the tyrant's wrath;
 Proud Hartfell quaked beneath his brand;
 And Cheviot heard the cries of death,
 Guarding his loved Northumberland.

But O, as fell that fateful night,
 What horrors Avin wilds deform,
 And choak the ghastly lingering light!
 There whirled the vortex of the storm.

Ere morn the wind grew deadly still,
 And dawning in the air updrew
 From many a shelve and shining hill,
 Her folding robe of fairy blue.

Then what a smooth and wonderous scene
 Hung o'er Loch Avin's lovely breast!
 Not top of tallest pine was seen,
 On which the dazzled eye could rest;

But mitred cliff, and crested fell,
 In lucid curls her brows adorn;

Aloft the radiant crescents swell,
 All pure as robes by angels worn.

Sound sleeps out, seer, far from the day,
 Beneath yon sleek and writhed cone ;
 His spirit steals, unmiss'd, away,
 And dreams across the desert lone.

Sound sleeps our seer !—the tempests rave,
 And cold sheets o'er his bosom fling ;
 The moldwarp digs his mossy grave ;
 His requiem Avin eagles sing.”
 * * * * *

CHAP. III.

LAST autumn, while I was staying a few weeks with my friend, Mr Grumple, minister of the extensive and celebrated parish of *Woolenhorn*, an incident occurred which hath afforded me a great deal of amusement ; and as I think it may divert some of your readers, I shall, without further preface, begin the relation.

We had just finished a wearisome debate on the rights of teind, and the claims which every clergyman of the established church of Scotland has for a grass glebe ; the china cups were already arranged, and the savoury tea-pot stood basking on the lege of the grate, when the servant maid entered, and told Mr Grumple that there was one at the door who wanted him.

We immediately heard a debate in the passage,—the parson pressing his guest to *come ben*, which the other stoutly

resisted, declaring aloud that "it was a' nonsense thegither, for he was eneuch to fley a' the grand folk out o' the room, an' set the kivering o' the floor aswoomin." The parlour door was however thrown open, and, to my astonishment, the first guests who presented themselves were two strong honest-looking colleys, or shepherd's dogs, that came bounding and capering into the room, with a great deal of seeming satisfaction. Their master was shortly after ushered in. He was a tall athletic figure, with a black beard, and dark brown hair hanging over his brow; wore clouted shoes, shod with iron, and faced up with copper; and there was altogether something in his appearance the most homely and uncouth of any exterior I had ever seen.

"This," said the minister, "is Peter Plash, a parishioner of mine, who has brought me in an excellent salmon, and wants a good office at my hand, he says, in return."—"This bit fish is naething, man," said Peter, sleeking down the hair on his brow; "I wish he had been better for your sake, but gin ye had seen the sport that we had wi' him at fowl-Midnight, ye wad hae leughen till ye had burstit." Here the shepherd, observing his two dogs seated comfortably on the hearth-rug, and deeming it an instance of high presumption and very bad manners, broke out with—"Ay, Whitefoot, lad! an' ye're for being a gentleman too? My certy, man, but ye're no blate!—I'm ill enough, to be sure, to come into a grand room this way, but yet I wadna set up my impudent nose an' my muckle rough brisket afore the howe, an' tak a' the fire to mysel—Get aff wi' ye, sir! An' you too, Frimmy, ye limmer! what's your business here?"—So saying, he attempted with the fringe of his plaid to drive them out; but they only ran about the room, eyeing their master with astonishment and concern. They had never, it seemed, been wont to be separated from him either by night or by day, and they could not understand why they

should be driven from the parlour, or how they had not as good a right to be there as he. Of course, neither threats nor blows could make them leave him; and it being a scene of life quite new to me, and of which I was resolved to profit as much as possible, at my intercession matters were made up, and the two canine associates were suffered to remain where they were. They were soon seated, one on each side of their master, clinging fondly to his feet, and licking the wet from his dripping trowsers.

Having observed, that when the shepherd entered he had begun to speak with great zest about the sport they had in killing the salmon, I again brought on the subject, and made him describe the diversion to me.—“O man!” said he, and then indulged in a hearty laugh—(*man* was always the term he used in addressing either of us—*sir* seemed to be no word in his vocabulary)—“O man, I wish ye had been there! I’ll lay a plack ye wad hae said ye never saw sic sport sin’ ever ye war born. We gat twall fish a’ thegither the day, an’ sair broostles we had wi’ some o’ them; but a’ was nae-thing to the killin o’ that ane at Pool-Midnight. Geordie Otterson, Matthew Ford, an’ me, war a’ ower the lugs after him. But ye’s hear:—When I came on to the rigs at the weil o’ Pool-Midnight, the sun was shinin’ bright, the wind was lowne, an’ wi’ the pirl* being away, the pool was as clear as crystal. I soon saw by the bells coming up, that there was a fish in the auld hauld; an’ I kecks an’ I glimes about, till, faith! I sees his blue murt fin. My teeth war a’ waterin to be in him, but I kend the shank o’ my wastert† wasna half length. So I cries to Geordie, ‘Geordie,’ says I, ‘aigh man! here’s a great chap just lyin steeping like a aik clog.’ Off comes Geordie, saughle shauglin a’ his pith; for the creature’s that greedy o’ fish, he wad venture his very

* Ripple.

† Fish-spear.

saul for them. I kend brawly what wad be the upshot. 'Now,' says I, 'Geordie, man yourself for this ae time. Aigh, man! he is a terrible ane for size—See, yonder he's lying.' The sun was shining sae clear that the deepness o' the pool was a great cheat. Geordie bait his lip for perfect eagerness, an' his cen war stelled in his head—he thought he had him safe i' the pat; but whenever he put the grains o' the leister into the water, I could speak nae mair, I kend sae weel what was comin, for I kend the depth to an inch.—Weel, he airches an' he vizies for a good while, an' at length made a push down at him wi' his whole might. Tut!—the leister didna gang to the grund by an ell—an' Geordie gaed into the deepest part o' Pool-Midnight wi' his head foremost! My sennins turned as supple as a dockan, an' I fell just down i' the bit wi' lauchin—ye might hae bund me wi' a strae. He wad hae drowned for aught that I could do; for when I saw his heels flingin up aboon the water as he had been dancin a hornpipe, I lost a' power thegither; but Matthew Ford harled him into the shallow wi' his leister.

"Weel, after that we cloddit the pool wi' great stanes, an' aff went the fish down the gullots, shinin like a rainbow. Then he ran, an' he ran! an' it was wha to be first in him. Geordie gat the first chance, an' I thought it was a' ovr; but just when he thought he was sure o' him, down cam Matthew full thrive, smashed his grains out through Geordie's, and gart him miss. It was my chance next; an' I took him neatly through the gills, though he gaed as fast as a skell-drake.

"But the sport grew aye better.—Geordie was sae mad at Matthew for taigling him, an' garring him tine the fish—(for he's a greedy dirt), that they had gane to grips in a moment; an' when I lookit back, they war just fightin like twae tarriers in the mids o' the water. The witters o' the twa leisters were frankit in ane anither, an' they couldna get

them sindry, else there had been a vast o' bludeshed; but they were knevillin, af' tryin to drown ane anither a' that they could; an' if they hadna been clean forefoughen they wad hae done't; for they were aye gaun out o' sight an' comin howdin up again. Yet after a', when I gaed back to redd them, they were sae inveterate that they wadna part till I was forced to haud them down through the water an' drown them baith."

"But I hope you have not indeed drowned the men," said I. "Ou na, only keepit them down till I took the power fairly frae them—till the bullers gae ower coming up; then I carried them to different sides o' the water, an' laid them down agroof wi' their heads at the inwith; an' after gluther-ing and spurring a wee while, they came to again. We dinna count muckle of a bit drowning match, us fishers. I wish I could get Geordie as weel doukit ilka day; it wad tak the smeddum frae him—for O, he is a greedy thing! But I fear it will be a while or I see sic glorious sport again."

Mr Grumple remarked, that he thought, by his account, it could not be very good sport to all parties; and that, though he always encouraged these vigorous and healthful exercises among his parishioners, yet he regretted that they could so seldom be concluded in perfect good humour.

"They're nae the waur o' a wee bit splore," said Peter; "they wad turn unco milk-an'-water things, af' dee away a' thegither wantin a broolzie. Ye might as weel think to keep a ale-vat workin wantin barm."

"But, Peter, I hope you have not been breaking the laws of the country by your sport to-day?"


"Na, troth hae we no, man;—close-time disna come in till the day after the-morn; but atween you an' me, close-time's nae ill time for us. It merely ties up the grit folk's hands, an' throws a' the sport into our's thegither. Na, na, we's

never complain o' close-time; if it warn for it there wad few fish fa' to poor folk's share."

This was a light in which I had never viewed the laws of the fishing association before; but as this honest hind spoke from experience, I have no doubt that the statement is founded in truth, and that the sole effect of close-time, in all the branches of the principal river, is merely to tie up the hands of every respectable man, and throw the fishing into the hands of poachers. He told me, that in all the rivers of the extensive parish of *Woolenhorn*, the fish generally run up during one flood and went away the next; and as the gentlemen and farmers of those parts had no interest in the preservation of the breeding salmon themselves, nor cared a farthing about the fishing associations in the great river, whom they viewed as monopolizers of that to which they had no right, the fish were wholly abandoned to the poachers, who generally contrived, by burning lights at the shallows, and spearing the fish by night, and netting the pools, to annihilate every shoal that came up. This is, however, a subject that would require an essay by itself.

Our conversation turned on various matters connected with the country; and I soon found, that though this hind had something in his manner and address the most uncultivated I had ever seen, yet his conceptions of such matters as came within the sphere of his knowledge were pertinent and just. He sung old songs, told us strange stories of witches and apparitions, and ~~and~~ many anecdotes of the pastoral life, which I ~~was~~ extremely curious, and wholly unknown to the literary part of the community. But at every observation that he made, he took care to sleek down his black hair over his brow, as if it were of the utmost consequence to his making a respectable appearance, that it should be equally spread, and as close pressed down as possible. When desired to join us in drinking tea, he said "it was a' nonsense the-

gither, for he hadna the least occasion ;” and when pressed to take bread, he persisted in the declaration that “ it was great nonsense.” He loved to talk of sheep, of dogs, and of *the lasses*, as he called them ; and conversed with his dogs in the same manner as he did with any of the other guests ; nor did the former ever seem to misunderstand him, unless in his unprecedented and illiberal attempt to expel them from the company.—“ Whitefoot ! haud aff the woman’s coat-tails, ye blockhead ! Deil hae me gin ye hae the mense of a miller’s horse, man.” Whitefoot instantly obeyed.—“ Trimmy ! come back aff the fire, dame ! Ye’re sae wat, ye raise a reek like a cottar wife’s lum—come back, ye limmer !” Trimmy went behind his chair.

It came out at last that his business with Mr Grumple that day was to request of him to go over to *Stridekirton* on the Friday following, and unite him, Peter Plash, in holy wedlock with his sweetheart and only joe, Jean Windlestrae ; and he said, if I “ would accompany the minister, and take share of a haggis wi’ them, I wad see  good lasses, and some good sport too, which was far better.” You may be sure I accepted of the invitation with great cordiality, nor had I any cause to repent it.

CHAP. IV.

THE wedding-day at length arrived ; and as the bridegroom had charged us to be there at an early hour, we set out on horseback, immediately after breakfast, for the remote hamlet

of Stridekirton. We found no regular path, but our way lay through a country which it is impossible to view without soothing emotions. The streams are numerous, clear as crystal, and wind along the glens in many fantastic and irregular curves. The mountains are green to the tops, very high, and form many beautiful soft and shaded outlines. They are, besides, literally speckled with snowy flocks, which, as we passed, were feeding or resting with such appearance of undisturbed repose, that the heart naturally found itself an involuntary sharer in the pastoral tranquillity that pervaded all around.

My good friend, Mr Gumble, could give me no information regarding the names of the romantic glens and mountains that came within our view; he, however, knew who were the proprietors of the land, who the tenants, what rent and stipend each of them paid, and whose teinds were unexhausted, this seemed to be the sum and substance of his knowledge concerning the life, character, and manners, of his rural parishioners. We that he could sometimes adduce circumstantial evidence that such and such farmers had made money of their land, and that others had made very little or none.

This district, over which he presides in an ecclesiastical capacity, forms an extensive portion of the Arcadia of Britain. It was likewise, in some late ages, noted for its zeal in the duties of religion, as well as for a thirst after the acquirement of knowledge ~~concerning its doctrines~~; but under the tuition of such a pastor as my relative appears to be, it is no wonder that practical religion should be losing ground from year to year, and scepticism, the natural consequence of laxity in religious duties, gaining ground in proportion.

It may be deemed, perhaps, rather indecorous, to indulge in such reflections respecting any individual who has the honour to be ranked as a member of a body so generally re-

pectable as our Scottish Clergy, and who, at the same time, maintains a fair *worldly* character; but in a general discussion—in any thing that relates to the common weal of mankind, all such inferior considerations must be laid aside. And the more I consider the simplicity of the people of whom I am now writing—the scenes among which they have been bred—and their lonely and sequestered habits of life, where the workings and phenomena of nature alone appear to attract the eye or engage the attention,—the more I am convinced that the temperament of their minds would naturally dispose them to devotional feelings. If they were but taught to read their Bibles, and only saw uniformly in the ministers of religion that sanctity of character by which the profession ought ever to be distinguished, these people would naturally be such as every well-wisher to the human race would desire a scattered peasantry to be. But when the most decided variance between example and precept is forced on their observation, what should we, or what can we, expect? Men must see, hear, feel, and judge accordingly. And certainly in no other instance is a patron so responsible to his sovereign, his country, and his God, as in the choice he makes of spiritual pastors.

These were some of the reflections that occupied my mind as I traversed this beautiful pastoral country with its morose teacher, and from these I was at length happily aroused by the appearance of the cottage, or shepherd's steading, to which we were bound. ~~It was~~ in a little valley in the bottom of a wild glen, or *hope*, as it is ~~th~~ called. It stood all alone; but besides the dwelling-house, there was a little byre that held the two cows and their young,—a good stack of hay, another of peas,—a sheep-house, and two homely gardens; and the place had altogether something of a snug, comfortable appearance. Though this is only an individual picture, I am told it may be viewed as a general one.

of almost every shepherd's dwelling in the south of Scotland; and it is only such pictures that, in the course of these tales, I mean to present to the public.

A number of the young shepherds and country-lasses had already arrived, impatient for the approaching wedding; others were coming down the green hills in mixed parties all around, leading one another, and skipping with the agility of lambs. They were all walking barefooted and barelegged, male and female—the men were dressed much in the ordinary way, only that the texture of their clothes was somewhat coarse, and the women had black beavers, white gowns, and “green coats kilted to the knee.” When they came near the house they went into little sequestered hollows, the men and women apart, “pat on their hose an’ shoon, and made themselves a’ trig an’ witching,” and then came and joined the group with a joy that could not be restrained by walking,—they ran to mix with their youthful associates.

Still as they arrived, we saw on our approach, that they drew up in two rows on the green, and soon found that it was a contest at leaping. The shepherds were stripped to the shirt and drawers, and exerting themselves in turn with all their might, while their sweethearts and sisters were looking on with no small share of interest.

We received a kind and hospitable welcome from honest Peter and his father, who was a sagacious-looking old carle, with a broad bonnet and gray locks; but the contest on the green still continuing, I went and joined the circle, delighted to see a pastime so appropriate to the shepherd's life. I was utterly astonished at the agility which the fellows displayed.

They took a short race of about twelve or fourteen paces, which they denominated the *ramrace*, and then rose from the footing-place with such a bound as if they had been going to mount and fly into the air. The crooked guise in which they flew shewed great art—the knees were doubled upward

—the body bent forward—and the head thrown somewhat back ; so that they alighted on their heels with the greatest ease and safety, their joints being loosened in such a manner that not one of them was straight. If they fell backward on the ground, the leap was not accounted fair. Several of the antagonists took the ramrace with a staff in their hand, which they left at the footing-place as they rose. This I thought unfair, but none of their opponents objected to the custom. I measured the distance, and found that two of them had actually leapt twenty-two feet, on a level plain, at one bound. This may appear extraordinary to those who never witnessed such an exercise, but it is a fact of which I can adduce sufficient proof.

Being delighted as well as astonished at seeing these feats of agility, I took Peter aside, and asked him if I might offer prizes for some other exercises. “Hout na,” said Peter ; “ye’ll affront them ; let them just alane ; they hae eneuch o’ incitement e’now, an’ rather owre muckle atween you an’ me ; forebye the brag o’ the thing—a lang as the lasses stand and look at them, they’ll ply atween death an’ life.” What Peter said was true,—instead of getting weary of their sports, their ardour seemed to increase ; and always as soon as the superiority of any individual in one particular exercise was manifest, another was instantly resorted to ; so that ere long there was one party engaged in wrestling, one in throwing the stone, and another at hop-step-and-leap, all at one and the same time.

This last seems to be rather the favourite amusement. It consists of three succeeding bounds, all with the same race ; and as the exertion is greater, and of longer continuance, they can judge with more precision the exact capability of the several competitors. I measured the ground, and found the greatest distance effected in this way to be forty-six feet. I am informed, that whenever two or three young shepherds

are gathered together, at fold or bught, moor or market, at all times and seasons, Sundays excepted, one or more of these athletic exercises is uniformly resorted to; and certainly, in a class where hardiness and agility are so requisite, they can never be too much encouraged.

But now all these favourite sports were terminated at once by a loud cry of "Hurra! the broose! the broose!" Not knowing what *the broose* meant, I looked all around with great precipitation, but for some time could see nothing but hills. At length, however, by marking the direction in which the rest looked, I perceived, at a considerable distance down the glen, five horsemen coming at full speed on a determined race, although on such a road, as I believe, a race was never before contested. It was that by which we had lately come, and the only one that led to the house from all the four quarters of the world. For some time it crossed "the crooks of the burn," as they called them; that is, it kept straight up the bottom of the glen, and crossed the burn at every turning. Of course every time that the group crossed this stream, they were for a moment involved in a cloud of spray that almost hid them from view, and the frequent recurrence of this rendered the effect highly comic.

Still, however, they kept apparently close together, till at length the path left the bottom of the narrow valley, and came round the sloping base of a hill that was all interspersed with drains and small irregularities of surface; this producing no abatement of exertion or speed, horses and men were soon foundering, rolling, and tumbling about in all directions. If this was amusing to view, it was still more so to hear the observations of the delighted group that stood round me and beheld it. "Hi, ha, ha! yonder's ane aff! Gude faith! yon's Jock o' the Meer-Cleuch; he has gotten an ill-faur'd flaip,—Holloa! yonder gaes another, down

through a lair to the een-holes ! Weel done, Aedie o' Aber-loch ! Hie till him, Tousy, outhar now or never ! Lay on, ye deevil, an' hing by the mane ! Hurray !"

The women were by this time screaming, and the men literally jumping and clapping their hands for joy at the de-
 ray that was going on ; and there was one little elderly-looking man whom I could not help noting ; he had fallen down on the ground in a convulsion of laughter, and was spurring and laying on it with both hands and feet. One, whom they denominated Davie Scott o' the Ramseycleuch Burn, amid the bay of dogs, and the shouts of men and women, got first to the bridegroom's door, and of course was acknowledged to have won the *broose* ; but the attention was soon wholly turned from him to those behind. The man whose horse had sunk in the bog, perceiving that all chance of extricating it again on the instant was out of the question, lost not a moment, but sprung to his feet—threw off his clothes, hat, and shoes, all at one brush—and ran towards the goal with all his might. Jock o' the Meer Cleuch, who was still a good way farther back, and crippled besides with his fall, perceiving this, mounted again—whipped on furiously, and would soon have overhied his pedestrian adversary ; but the shepherds are bad horsemen, and, moreover, Jock's horse, which belonged to Gideon of Kirkhope, was unacquainted with the sheep-drains, and terrified at them ; consequently, by making a sudden jerk backwards when he should have leapt across one of them, ~~and when Jock~~ supposed that he was just going to do so, he threw his ~~self~~ a second time. The shouts of laughter were again renewed, and every one was calling out, " Now for the mell ! Now for the mell ! Deil tak the hindmost now ! " These sounds reached Jock's ears ; he lost no time in making a last effort, but flew at his horse again—~~ap~~mounted him—and, by urging him to a des-

perate effort, actually got a-head of his adversary just when within ten yards of the door, and thus escaped the disgrace of *winning the mell*.

I was afterwards told, that in former ages it was the custom on the Border, when the victor in the race was presented with the prize of honour, the one who came in last was, at the same time, presented with a mallet or large wooden hammer, called a *mell* in the dialect of the country, and that then the rest of the competitors stood in need to be near at hand, and instantly to force the *mell* from him, else he was at liberty to knock as many of them down with it as he could. The *mell* has now, for many years, been only a nominal prize; but there is often more sport about the gaining of it than the principal one. There was another occurrence which added greatly to the animation of this, which I had not time before fully to relate. About the time when the two unfortunate wights were unhorsed in the bog, those who still kept or were met and attacked, open mouth, by at least twenty frolicsome colliers, that seemed fully as intent on sport as their masters. These bit the hind-legs of the horses, snapped at their noses, and raised such an outrage of barking, that the poor animals, forespent as they were, were constrained to lay themselves out almost beyond power. Nor did the fray cease when the race was won. Encouraged by the noise and clamour which then arose about the gaining of the *mell*, the staunch colliers continued the attack, and hunted the racers round and round the houses, with great speed, while the horses were all the time wheeling and flinging most furiously, and their riders, in desperation, vociferating and cursing their assailants.

All the guests now crowded together, and much humour and blunt wit passed about the gaining of the broose. Each of the competitors had his difficulties and cross accidents to relate; and each affirmed, that if it had not been such and

such hindrances, he would have gained the brooze to a certainty. Davie Scott o' the Ramsey-cleuch-burn, however, assured them, that "he was aye hauding in his yaud wi' the left hand, and gin he had liket to gie her out her head, she wad hae gallopit amaisht a third faster."—"That may be," said Aedie o' Aberlosk, "but I hae come better on than I expectit wi' my Cameronian naig. I never saw him streek himsel sae afore—I dare say he thought that Davie was auld Clavers mountit on Hornie. Poor fallow!" continued he, patting him, "he has a good deal o' anti-prelatic dourness in him; but I see he has some spirit, for a' that. I bought him for a powney, but he's turned out a beast."

I next overheard one proposing to the man who left his horse, and exerted himself so manfully on foot, to go and pull his horse out of the quagmire. "Na, na," said he, "let him stick yonder a while, to learn him mair sense than to gang intill an open well-ee and gar ane get a mell. I saw the gate I was gawn, but I couldna swee him aff; sae I just thought o' Jenny Blythe, and plunged in. I kend weel something was to happen, for I met her first this morning, the ill-hued carlin: but I had need to haud my tongue!—Gudeman, let us see a drap whisky." He was presented with a glass. "Come, here's Jenny Blythe," said Andrew, and drank it off.—"I wad be nae the waur o' a wee drap too, said Aberlosk, taking a glass of whisky in his hand, and looking steadfastly through it. "I think I see Jock the elder here," said he; "ay, it's just him—come, here's *the five kirks o' Eskdale*." He drank it off. "Gudeman, that's naething but a *Tam-Park* of a glass: if ye'll fill it again, I'll gie a toast ye never heard afore. This is *Bailey's Dictionary*," said Aedie, and drank it off again.—"But when a' your daffin's owre, Aedie," said John, "what hae ye made o' your young friend?"—"Ou! she's safe eneuch," returned he; "the best-man and John the elder are wi' her."

On looking round the corner of the house, we now perceived that the bride and her two attendants were close at hand. They came at a *quick canter*. She managed her horse well, kept her saddle with great ease, and seemed an elegant sprightly girl, of twenty-four or thereabouts. Every cap was instantly waved in the air, and the bride was saluted with three hearty cheers. Old John, well aware of what it behoved him to do, threw off his broad bonnet, and took the bride respectfully from her horse—kissed and welcomed her home. “Ye’re welcome hame till us, Jeany, my bonny woman,” said he; “may God bless ye, an’ mak ye just as good an’ as happy as I wish ye.” It was a beautiful and affecting sight to see him leading her toward the home that was now to be her own. He held her hand in both his—the wind waved his long gray locks—his features were lengthened considerably the wrong way, and I could perceive a tear glistening on his furrowed cheek.

All seemed to know exactly the parts they had to act; but every thing came on me like magic, and quite by surprise. The bride now stopped short on the threshold, while the old man broke a triangular cake of short-bread over her head, the pieces of which he threw about among the young people. These scrambled for them with great violence and eagerness; and indeed they seemed always to be most in their element when any thing that required strength or activity was presented. For my part, I could not comprehend what the sudden convulsion meant, (for in a moment the crowd was moving like a whirlpool, and tumbling over one another in half dozens) till a little girl, escaping from the vortex, informed me that “they war battling wha first to get a haud o’ the bride’s bunn.” I was still in the dark, till at length I saw the successful candidates presenting their favourites with small pieces of this mystical cake. One beautiful maid, with light locks, blue eyes, and cheeks like the vernal rose, came

nimbly up to me, called me familiarly by my name, looked at me with perfect seriousness, and without even a smile on her innocent face, asked me *if I was married*. I could scarcely contain my gravity, while I took her by the hand, and answered in the negative—"An' hae ye no gotten a piece o' the bride's cake?"—"Indeed, my dear, I am sorry I have not."—"O, that's a great shame, that ye hae nae gotten a wee bit! I canna bide to see a stranger guided that gate. Here, sir, I'll gie ye the tae half o' mine, it will scr' us baith; an I wad rather want mysel than as civil a gentleman that's a stranger should want."

So saying, she took a small piece of cake from her lap, and parted it with me, at the same time rolling each of the pieces carefully up in a leaf of an old halfpenny ballad; but the whole of her demeanour showed the utmost seriousness, and of how much import she judged this trivial crumb to be. "Now," continued she, "ye maun lay this aneath your head, sir, when ye gang to your bed; and ye'll dream about the woman ye are to get for your wife. Ye'll just think ye see her plainly an' bodily afore your een; an' ye'll be sae weel acquainted wi' her, that ye'll ken her again when ye see her, if it war amang a thousand. It's a queer thing, but it's perfectly true; sac ye maun *mind no to forget*."

I promised the most punctual observance of all that she enjoined, and added, that I was sure I would dream of the lovely giver; that indeed I would be sorry were I to dream of any other, as I deemed it impossible to dream of so much innocence and beauty.—"*Now mind no to forget*," rejoined she, and skipped lightly away to join her youthful associates.

As soon as the bride was led into the house, old Nelly, the bridegroom's mother, went aside to see the beast on which her daughter-in-law had been brought home; and perceiving that it was a mare, she fell a-crying and wringing her hands.—I inquired, with some alarm, what was the matter.

"O dear, sir," returned she, "it's for the poor bairnies that'll yet hae to dree this unlucky mischance—Laike-a-day, poor waefu' brats! they'll no lie in a dry bed for a dozen o' years to come!"

"Hout! haud your tongue, Nelly," said the best man, "the thing's but a freat a' thegither. But really we coudna help it: the factor's naig wantit a fore-fit shoe, an' was beckin like a water-craw. If I had ridden five miles to the smiddy wi' him, it is ten to ane but Jock Anderson wad hae been drunk, an' then we wadna hae gotten the bride hame afore twall o'clock at night; sae I thought it was better to let them tak their chance than spoil sae muckle good sport, an' I e'en set her on Wattie Bryden's pownie. The factor has behaved very ill about it, the muckle stoottin gowk! If I had durst, I wad hae gien him a deevil of a thrashin; but he says, 'Faith its—that—yes, indeed—that—he will send them—yes, faith—it's even a—a new tikabed every year.'"



CHAP. V.

As soon as the marriage ceremony was over, all the company shook hands with the young couple, and wished them every kind of joy and felicity. The rusticity of their benisons amused me, and there were several of them that I have never, to this day, been able to comprehend. As, for instance—one wished them "thumpin luck and fat weans;" another, "a bien rannlebauks, and tight thack and rape o'er

their heads;" a third gave them "a routh aumrie and a clove nieve;" and the lasses wished them "as mony hincey m'ons as the family had fingers'an' tacs." I took notes of these at the time, and many more, and set them down precisely as they were spoken; all of them have doubtless meanings attached to them, but these are perhaps the least mystical.

I expected, now, that we should go quietly to our dinner; but instead of that, they again rushed rapidly away towards the green, crying out, "Now for the broose! now for the broose!"—"The people are unquestionably mad," said I to one that stood beside me; "are they really going to run their horses again among such ravines and bogs as these? they must be dissuaded from it." The man informed me that the race was now to be on foot; that there were always two races—the first on horseback for the bride's napkin, and the second on foot for the bridegroom's spurs. I asked him how it came that they had thus altered the order of things in the appropriation of the prizes, for that the spurs would be the fittest for the riders, as the napkin would for the runners. He admitted this, but could adduce no reason why it was otherwise, save that "it was the gude auld gate, and it would be a pity to alter it." He likewise informed me, that it was customary for some to run on the bride's part, and some on the bridegroom's; and that it was looked on as a great honour to the country, or connexions of either party, to bear the broose away from the other. Accordingly, on our way to the race-ground, the bridegroom was recruiting hard for runners on his part, and, by the time we reached the starting-place, had gained the consent of five. One now asked the *best-man* why he was not recruiting in behalf of the bride. "Never mind," said he; "do ye strip an' mak ready—I'll find them on the bride's part that will do a' the turn." It was instantly rumoured around, that he had brought one all the way from Liddesdale to carry the prize away on the bride's part,

and that he was the best runner on all the Border side. The runners, that were all so brisk of late, were now struck dumb; and I marked them going one by one, eyeing the stranger with a jealous curiosity, and measuring him with their eyes from head to foot.—No, not one of them would venture to take the field against him!—"they war only jokin'—they never intendit to rin—they war just jaunderin wi' the bridegroom for fun."—"Come, fling aff your claes, Hobby, an' let them see that ye're ready for them," said the best-man. The stranger obeyed—he was a tall, slender, and handsome youth, with brown hair, prominent features, and a ruddy complexion.—"Come, lads," said the best-man, "Hobby canna stand wanting his claes; if nane of ye are ready to start with him in twa minutes, he shall rin the course himsel, and then I think the folk o' this country are shamed for ever,"—"No sae fast," said a little funny-looking fellow, who instantly began to strip off his stockings and shoes; "no sae fast, lad; he may won, but he sanna won untried." A committee was instantly formed apart, where it was soon agreed, that all the good runners there should, with one accord, start against this stranger; for that, "if naebody ran but Tam the tailor, they wad be a' shamed thegither, for Tam wad never come within a stane-clod o' him."—"Hout, ay—that's something like yoursels, callants," said old John; "try him—he's but a saft feckless-like chiel; I think ye needna be sae feared for him."—"It is a' ye ken," said another; "do nae ye see that he's lingit like a grew—and he'll rin like ane;—they say he rins faster than a horse can gallop."—"I'll try him on my Cameronian whenever he likes," said Aberloak; "him that beats a Cameronian has but apother to beat."

In half a minute after this, seven athletic youths were standing in a row stripped, and panting for the race; and I could note, by the paleness of their faces, how anxious they were about the result—all save Aedie o' Aberloak, on whom

the whisky had made some impression, and who seemed only intent on making fun.⁴ At the distance of 500 yards there was a man placed, whom they denominated *the stoop*, and who had his hat raised on the end of his staff, lest another might be mistaken for him. Around this *stoop* they were to run, and return to the starting-place, making in all a heat of only 1000 yards, which I was told is the customary length of a race all over that country. They took all hold of one another's hands—the best-man adjusted the line in which they stood, and then gave the word as follows, with considerable pauses between: *Once—Twice—Thrice*,—and off they flew like lightning, in the most beautiful style I ever beheld. The ground was rough and unequal, but there was no restraint or management practised; every one set out on full speed from the very first. The Borderer took the lead, and had soon distanced them a considerable space—all save Aberlosk, who kept close at his side, straining and twisting his face in a most tremendous manner: at length he got rather before him, but it was an overstretch—Aedie fell flat on his face, nor did he offer to rise, but lay still on the spot, puffing and swearing against the champion of Liddesdale.

Hobby cleared the *stoop* first by about twenty yards;—the rest turned in such a group that I could not discern in what order, but they were all obliged to turn it to the right, or what they called “sun-ways-about,” on pain of losing the race. The generality of the “weddingers” were now quite silent, and looked very blank when they saw this stranger still keeping so far a-head. Aberlosk tried to make them all fall one by one, by creeping in before them as they passed; and at length laid hold of the hindmost by the foot, and brought him down.

By this time two of the Borderer's acquaintances had run down the green to meet him, and encourage him on. “Weel done, Hobby!” they were shouting: “Weel done, Hobby!

—Liddesdale for ever!—Let them lick at that!—Let the benty-necks crack now!—Weel done, Hobby!"—I really felt as much interested about the issue, at this time, as it was possible for any of the adverse parties to be. The enthusiasm seemed contagious; for though I knew not one side from the other, yet was I running among the rest, and shouting as ~~they~~ did. A sort of half-animated murmur now began to spread, and gained ground every moment. A little gruff Cossack-looking peasant came running near with a peculiar wildness in his looks, and accosted one of the men that were cheering Hobby. "Dinna be just sae loud an' ye like, Willie Beattie; dinna mak nae mair din than just what's needfu'. Will o' Bellendine! haud till him, sir, or it's day wi' us! Hie, Will, if ever ye ran i' your life!—By Jehu, sir, ye're winning every third step!—He has him *dead*! he has him *dead*!" The murmur, which had increased like the rushing of many waters, now terminated in a frantic shout. Hobby had strained too hard at first, in order to turn the stoop before Aberlosk, who never intended turning it at all—the other youth was indeed fast gaining on him, and I saw his lips growing pale, and his knees plaiting as if unable to bear his weight—his breath was quite exhausted, and though within twenty yards of the stoop, Will began to shoulder by him. So anxious was Hobby now to keep his ground, that his body pressed onward faster than his feet could keep up with it, and his face, in consequence, came deliberately against the earth,—he could not be said to fall, for he just ran on till he could get no farther for something that stopped him. Will o' Bellendine won the broose amid clamours of applause, which he seemed fully to appreciate—the rest were over Hobby in a moment; and if it had not been for the wayward freaks of Aberlosk, this redoubted champion would fairly have won the mell.

The lad that Aedie overthrew, in the midst of his career,

was very angry with him on account of the outrage—but Aedie cared for no man's anger. "The man's mad," said he; "wad ye attempt to strive wi' the champion of Liddesdale?—Hout, hout! haud your tongue; ye're muckle better as ye are. I sall tak the half o' the mell wi' ye."

On our return to the house, I was anxious to learn something of Aedie, who seemed to be a very singular character. Upon applying to a farmer of his acquaintance, I was told a number of curious and extravagant stories of him, one or two of which I shall insert here, as I profess to be giving anecdotes of the country life.

He once quarrelled with another farmer on the highway, who, getting into a furious rage, rode at Aedie to knock him down. Aedie, who was on foot, fled with all his might to the top of a large dunghill for shelter, where, getting hold of a graip (a three-pronged fork used in agriculture), he attacked his adversary with such an overflow of dung, that his horse took fright, and in spite of all he could do, ran clear off with him, and left Aedie master of the field. The farmer, in high wrath, sent him a challenge to fight with pistols, in a place called Selkith Hope, early in the morning. This is an extremely wild, steep, and narrow glen. Aedie attended, but kept high up on the hill; and when his enemy reached the narrowest part of the Hope, began the attack by rolling great stones at him down from the mountain. Nothing could be more appalling than this—the farmer and his horse were both alike terrified, and, as Aedie expressed it, "he set them baith back the gate they cam, as their heads had been a-lowe."

Another time, in that same Hope of Selkith, he met a stranger, whom he mistook for another man called Jamie Sword; and because the man denied that he was Jamie Sword, Aedie fastened a quarrel on him, insisting on him either being Jamie Sword, or giving some proofs to the con-

trary. It was very impudent in him, he said, to give any man the lie, when he could produce no evidence of his being wrong. The man gave him his word that he was not Jamie Sword. "O, but that's naething," said Aedie, "I give you ~~my~~ word that you are, and I think my word's as good as yours ony day." Finally, he told the man, that if he ~~would~~ not acknowledge that he was wrong, and confess that he was Jamie Sword, he would fight him.—He did so, and got himself severely thrashed.

The following is a copy of a letter, written by Aedie to a great personage, dated Aberlosk, May 27th, 1806.*

"To George the Third, London."

DEAR SIR,—I went thirty miles on foot yesterday to pay your taxes, and, after all, the bodies would not take them, saying, that I was too late, and that they must now be recovered, with expenses, by regular course of law. I thought if your Majesty was like me, money would never come wrong to you, although it were a few days too late; so I enclose you £27 in notes, and half-a-guinea, which is the amount of what they charge me for last year, and fourpence halfpenny over. You must send me a receipt when the coach comes back, else they will not believe that I have paid you.

Direct to the care of Andrew Wilson, butcher in Hawick.

I am, dear Sir, your most humble servant. A*** B***
To the King.

P. S.—This way^t of taxing the farmers will never do; you will see the upshot."

* Should the reader imagine that this curious epistle is a mere coinage of my own, I can assure him, from undoubted authority, that both Aedie and his letter are faithful transcripts from real and existing originals.

It has been reported over all that country, that this letter reached its destination, and that a receipt was returned in due course of post ; but the truth is (and, for the joke's sake, it is a great pity it should have been so), that the singularity of the address caused some friends to open the letter, and return it, with the money, to the owner ; but not before they had taken a copy of it, from which the above is exactly transcribed.



COUNTRY DREAMS AND APPARITIONS.

No II.

CONNEL OF DEE.

I.

CONNEL went out by a blink of the moon
 To his light little bower in the deane ;
 He thought they had gi'en him his supper owr soon,
 And that still it was lang until e'en
 Oh ! the air was so sweet, and the sky so serene,
 And so high his soft languishment grew—
 That visions of happiness danced o'er his mind ;
 He longed to leave parent and sisters behind ;
 For he thought that his Maker to him was unkind,
 For that high were his merits he knew.

II.

Sooth, Connel was halesome, and stalwart to see,
 The bloom of fayir yudith he wore ;

But the lirk of displeasure hang over his bree,
 Nae glisk of contentment it bore,
 He lang'd for a wife with a mailen and store ;
 He grevit in idless to lie,
 Far from his cottage he wished to remove,
 To wassail and waik, and unchided to rove,
 And beik in the cordial transports of love
 All under a kindlier sky.

III.

O sweet was the fa' of that gloaming to view !
 The day-lighte crap laigh on the doon,
 And left its pale borders abeigh on the blue,
 To mix wi' the beams of the moon.
 The hill lang its skaddaw the greinwud aboon,
 The houf of the bodyng Benshee ;
 Slow o'er him were sailing the cloudlets of June,
 The beetle began his wild airt to tune,
 And sang on the wynde with ane eirysome croon,
 Away on the breeze of the Dee !

IV.

With haffat on lufe poor Connel lay lorn !
 He languishit for muckle and mair !
 His bed of greine hether he eynit to scorn,
 The bygone he doughtna weel bear !
 Atour him the greine leife was fannyng the air,
 In noiseless and flychtering play ;
 The hush of the water fell saft on his ear,
 And he fand as gin sleep, wi' her gairies, war near,
 Wi' her freaks and her ferlies and phantoms of fear,
 But he eiderly wysit her away.

V.

Short time had he sped in that sellible strife
 Ere he saw a young maiden stand by,

Who seem'd in the bloom and the bell of her life ;
 He wist not that aye was sae nigh !
 But sae sweet was her look, and sae saft was her eye,
 That his heart was all quaking with love ;
 And then there was kythin a dimple sae sly,
 At play on her cheek, of the moss-rose's dye,
 That kindled the heart of poor Connel on high
 With ravishment deadlie to prove.

VI.

He deemed her a beautifull spirit of night,
 And eiry was he to assay ;
 But he found she was mortal with thrilling delight,
 For her breath was like zephyr of May ;
 Her eye was the dew-bell, the beam of the day.
 And her arm it was softer than silk ;
 Her hand was so warm, and her lip was so red,
 Her slim taper waiste so enchantingly made !
 And some beauties moreover that cannot be said—
 Of bosom far whiter than milk !

VII.

Poor Connel was reaved of all power and of speech,
 His frame grew all powerless and weak ;
 He neither could stir, nor caress her, nor fleech,
 He trembled, but word couldna speak !
 But O, when his lips touched her soft rosy cheek,
 The channels of feeling ran dry,
 He found that like emmets his life-blood it crept,
 His liths turned as limber as dud that is steeped,
 He streekit his limbs, and he moaned and he wept ;
 And for love he was just gaun to die.

VIII.

The damsel beheld, and she raised him so kind,
 And she said, “ My dear beautiful swain,

Take heart till I tell you the hark of my mind,
 I'm weary of lying my lane;
 I ~~have~~ castles, and lands, and flocks of my ain,
 But want ~~me~~ my gillour to share;
~~A~~ man that is hale as the hart on the hill,
 As stark and as kind, is the man to my will,
~~Who~~ has slept on the heather and drank of the rill,
 And, like you, gentle, amorous, and fair.

IX.

I often hae heard, that like you there was nane,
 And I aince gat a glisk of thy face;
 Now far have I ridden, and far have I gane,
 In hopes thou wilt nurice the grace,
 To make me thy ain—O come to my embrace!
 For I love thee as dear as my life!
 I'll make thee a laird of the boonmost degree,
 My castles and lands I'll give freely to thee,
 Though rich and abundant thine own they shall be,
 If thou wilt but make me thy wife.

X.

Oh! never was man sae delighted and fain!
 He bowed a consent to her will,
 Kind Providence thankit again and again;
 And 'gan to display his rude skill
 In leifu' endearment, and thought it nae ill
 To kiss the sweet lips of the fair,
 And press her to lie, in that gloamin sae still,
 Adown by his side in the howe of the hill,
 For the water flow'd sweet, and the sound of the rill
 Would soothe every sorrow and care.

XI.

No—she wadna lie by the side of a man
 Till the rites of the marriage were bye.

Away they hae sped ; but soon Connel began,
 For his heart it was worn to a sigh,
 To fondle, and simper, and look in her eye,
 Oh ! direful to bear was his wound !
 When on her fair neck fell his fingers sae dun—
 It strak thro' his heart like the shot of a gun !
 He felt as the sand of existence were run.
 He trembled, and fell to the ground.

XII.

O, Connel, dear Connel, be patient a while !
 These wounds of thy bosom will heal,
 And thou with thy love may'st walk many a mile
 Nor transport nor passion once feel.
 Thy spirits once broke on electerick wheel,
 Cool reason her empire shall gain ;
 And haply, repentance in dowy array,
 And laithly disgust may arise in thy way,
 Encumb'ring the night, and o'ercasting the day,
 And turn all those pleasures to pain.

XIII.

The mansion is gained, and the bridal is past,
 And the transports of wedlock prevail ;
 The lot of poor Connel the shepherd is cast
 Mid pleasures that never can fail ;
 The balms of Arabia sweeten the gale,
 The tables for ever are spread
 With damask, and viands, and heart-cheering wine,
 Their splendour and elegance fully combine,
 His lawns they are ample, his bride is divine,
 And of goud-fringed silk 'is his bed.

XIV.

The transports of love gave rapture, and flew ;
 The banquet soon rated and floyed ;

Nae mair they delighted, nae langer were new,
 They could not be ever enjoyed !
 He ~~let in~~ his bosom a fathomless void,
 A yearning again to be free ;
~~Than~~ all that voluptuous sickening store,
 The wine that he drank and the robes that he wore,
~~His~~ diet of milk had delighted him more
 Afar on the hills of the Dee.

XV.

O oft had he sat by the clear springing well,
 And dined from his wallet full fain !
 Then sweet was the scent of the blue heather bell,
 And free was his bosom of pain ;
 The laverock was lost in the lift, but her strain
 Came trilling so sweetly from far,
 To rapture the hour he would wholly resign,
 He would listen, and watch, till he saw her decline,
 And the sun's yellow beam on her dappled breast shine,
 Like some little musical star.

XVI.

And then he wad lay his blue bonnet aside,
 And turn his rapt eyes to the heaven,
 And bless his kind Maker who all did provide,
 And beg that he might be forgiven,
 For his sins were like crimson !—all bent and uneven
 The path he had wilsomely trode !
 Then who the delight of his bosom could tell ?
 O sweet was that meal by his pure mountain well ;
 And sweet was its water he drank from the shell,
 And peaceful his moorland abode.

XVII.

~~But now~~ was he deaved and babbled outright,
 By gossips in endless array,

Who thought not of sin, nor of Satan aright,
 Nor the dangers that mankind belay ;
 Who joked about heaven, and scorned to pray,
 And gloried in that was a shame.
 O Connel was troubled at things that befel !
 So different from scenes he had once loved so well.
 He deem't he was placed on the confines of Hell,
 And fand like the saur of its flame !

XVIII.

Of bonds and of law-suits he still was in doubt,
 And old debts coming due every day ;
 And a thousand odd things he kend naething about
 Kept him in continued dismay.
 At board he was awkward, nor wist what to say,
 Nor what his new honours became ;
 His guests they wad mimic and laugh in their slieve.
 He blushed, and he faltered, and scarce dought believe
 That men were so base as to smile and deceive ;
 Or eynied of him to make game !

XIX.

Still franker and freer his gossippers grew,
 And preyed upon him and his dame ;
 Their jests and their language to Connel were new,
 It was slander, and cursing, and shame !
 He groaned in his heart, and he thought them to blame
 For revel and rout without end ;
 He saw himself destined to pamper and feed
 A race whom he hated, a profligate breed,
 The scum of existence to vengeance decreed !
 Who laughed at their God and thei' friend.

XX.

He saw that in wickedness all did delight,
 And he kendna what length it might bear ;

They drew him to evil by day and by night,
 To scenes that he trembled to shafe!
 His ~~heart~~ it grew sick and his head it grew sair,
 And he thought what he dared not to tell!
 He thought of the far distant hills of the Dee!
 Of his ~~cave~~, and his cheese, and his lair on the lea!
 Of the laverock that hung on the heaven's ce-bree,
 His prayer and his clear mountain well!

XXI.

His breast he durst sparingly trust wi' the thought,
 Of the virtuous days that were fled!
 Yet still his kind lady he loved as he ought,
 Or soon from that scene he had fled.
 It now was but rarely she honoured his bed—
 'Twas modesty, heightening her charms!
 A delicate feeling that man cannot ween!
 O heaven!—each night from his side she had been—
 He found it at length——Nay he saw't with his een,
 She slept in a paramour's arms!!!

XXII.

It was the last pang that the spirit could bear!
 Destruction and death was the meed.
 For forfeited vows there was nought too severe;
 Even conscience applauded the deed.
 His mind was decided, her doom was decreed;
 He led her to chamber apart
 To give her to know, of his wrongs he had sense;
 To chide and upbraid her in language intense
 And kill her, at least, for her heinous offence—
 A crime at which demons would start!

XXIII.

With grievous reproaches, in agonized zeal,
 Stern Connel his lecture began,

He mentioned her crime!—She turned on her heel,
And her mirth to ^extremity ran.

“Why that was the fashion!—no sensible ~~man~~
Could e’er of such freedom complain.

What was it to him? there were maid^{’s} enow
Of the loveliest forms, and the loveliest hue,
Who blithely would be his companion^{’s}, he knew,
If he wearied of lying his lane.”

XXIV.

How Connel was shocked!—but his fury still rose,
He shivered from toe to the crown!
His hair stood like heath on the mountain that grows,
And each hair had a life of its own!
“O thou most”——But whereto his passion had flown
No man to this day can declare,
For his dame, with a frown, laid her hand on his mouth,
That hand once as sweet as the breeze of the south!
That hand that gave pleasures and honours and routh,
And she said, with a dignified air,

XXV.

“Peace booby! if life thou regardest beware,
I have had some fair husbands ere now;
They wooed, and they flattered, they sighed and they sware,
At length they grew irksome like you.
Come hither one moment, a sight I will show
That will teach thee some breeding and grace.”
She opened a door, and there Connel beheld
A sight that to trembling his spirit impelled,
A man standing chained, who nor ’plained, nor rebelled,
And that man had a sorrowful face.”

XXVI.

Down creaked a trap-door, on which he was ^laced,
Right softly and slowly it fell;

And the man seemed in terror, and strangely amazed,
 But why Connel could not then tell.
 He sunk and he sunk as the vice did impel;
 At length, as far downward he drew,
 Good Lord! In a trice, with the pull of a string,
 A pair of dread shears, like the thunder-bolt's wing,
 Came snap on his neck, with a terrible spring,
 And severed it neatly in two.

XXVII.

Adown fell the body—the head lay in sight,
 The lips in a moment grew wan;
 The temple just quivered, the eye it grew white,
 And upward the purple threads span!
 The dark crooked streamlets along the boards ran,
 Thin pipings of reek could be seen;
 Poor Connel was blinded, his lugs how they sung!
 He looked once again, and he saw like the tongue,
 That motionless out 'twixt the livid lips hung,
 Then mirkness set over his een.

XXVIII.

He turned and he dashed his fair lady aside;
 And off like the lightning he broke,
 By staircase and gallery, with horrified stride,
 He turned not, he staid not, nor spoke;
 The iron-spiked court-gate he could not unlock
 His haste was beyond that of man;
 He stopp'd not to rap, and he staid not to call,
 With ram-race he cleared at a bensil the wall,
 And headlong beyond got a grievous fall,
 But he rose, and he ran, and he ran!

XXIX.

As stag of the forest, when fraudfully coiled,
 And mowed up in barn for prey,

Sees his dappled comrades dishonoured and soiled
 In their blood, on some festival day
 Bursts all intervention, and hies him away,
 Like the wind over holt over lea ;
 So Connel pressed on, all encumbrance he threw,
 Over height, over hollow, he lessened to view,
 It may not be said that he ran, for he flew,
 Straight on for the hills of the Dec.

XXX.

The contrair of all other runners in life,
 His swiftness increased as he flew,
 But be it remembered, he ran from a wife,
 And a trap-door that sunk on a screw.
 His prowess he felt and decidedly knew,
 So much did his swiftness excel,
 That he skimm'd the wild paths like a thing of the mind,
 And the stour from each footstep was seen on the wind,
 Distinct by itself for a furlong behind,
 Before that it mingled or fell.

XXXI.

He came to a hill, the ascent it was steep,
 And much did he fear for his breath ;
 He halted, he ventured behind him to peep,
 The sight was a vision of death !
 His wife and her paramours came on the path,
 Well mounted with devilish speed ;
 O Connel, poor Connel, thy hope is a wreck !
 Sir, run for thy life, without stumbl'e or check,
 It is thy only stake, the last chance for thy neck,
 Strain Connel, or death is thy meed !

XXXII.

O wend to the right, to the woodland betide ;
 Gain that, and yet safe thou may'st be ;

How fast they are gaining!—O stretch to the brake!
 Poor Connel, 'tis over with thee!
 In the breath of the horses, his yellow locks flee,
 The voice of his wife's in the van:
 Even that was not needful to heighten his fears,
 He sprang o'er the bushes, he dashed thro' the breers,
 For he thought of the trap-door and d——ble sheers,
 And he cried to his God, and he ran.

XXXIII.

Thro' gallwood and bramble he floundered amain,
 No bar his advancement could stay;
 Tho' heels-o'er-head whirled again and again,
 Still faster he gained on his way.
 This moment on swinging bough powerless he lay,
 The next he was flying along;
 So lightly he scarce made the green leaf to quake,
 Impetuous he splashed thro' the bog and the lake,
 He rainbowed the hawthorn, he needled the brake,
 With power supernaturally strong.

XXXIV.

The riders are foiled, and far lagging behind,
 Poor Connel has leisure to pray,
 He hears their dread voices around on the wind,
 Still farther and farther away:
 "O Thou who sit'st throned o'er the fields of the day,
 Have pity this once upon me,
 Deliver from those that are hunting my life,
 From *traps* of the wicked that round me are rife,
 And O, above all, from the rage of a wife,
 And guide to the hills of the Dee.

XXXV.

And, if ever I ~~g~~amble at Providence more,
 Or scornfully own mountains of heath;

If ever I yearn for that sin-breeding ore,
 Or shape to complaining a breath,
 Then may I be nip^d with the scissars of death,"--
 No farther could Connel proceed,
 He thought of the snap that he saw in the nook,
 Of the tongue that came out, and the temple that shook,
 Of the blood and the reek, and the deadening look ;
 He lifted his bonnet and fled.

XXXVI.

He wandered and wandered thro' woodlands of gloom,
 And sorely he sobbed and he wept ;
 At cherk of the pyat, or bee's passing boomb,
 He started, he listened, he leaped.
 With eye and with ear a strick guardship he kept ;
 No scene could his sorrows beguile.
 At length he stood lone by the side of the Dee,
 It was placid and deep and as broad as a sea ;
 O could he get over, how safe he might be,
 And gain his own mountains the while.

XXXVII.

'Twas dangerous to turn, but proceeding was worse.
 For the country grew open and bare,
 No forest appeared, neither broomwood nor gorse,
 Nor furze that would shelter a hare,
 Ah ! could he get over how safe he might fare,
 At length he resolved to try.
 At worst, 'twas but drowning, and what was a life
 Compared to confinement in sin and in strife,
 Beside a trap-door, and a scandalous wife ?
 'Twas nothing, he'd swim, or he'd die.

XXXVIII.

Ah ! he could not swim, and was loath to resign
 This life for a world unknown

For he had been sinning, and misery condign
 Would sure be his portion alone.
 How sweetly the sun on the green mountain shone !
 And the flocks they were resting in peace,
 Or bleating along on each parallel path ;
 The lambs they were skipping on fringe of the heath,
 How different might kythe the lone vallies of death,
 And cheerfulness evermore cease.

XXXIX.

All wistful he stood on the brink of the pool,
 And dropt on its surface the tear ;
 He started at something that boded him dool,
 And his mouth fell wide open with fear,
 The trample of gallopers fell on his ear,
 One look was too much for his eye,
 For there was his wife, and her paramours twain,
 With whip and with spur coming over the plain,
 Bent forward, revengeful, they galloped amain,
 They hasten, they quicken, they fly !

XL.

Short time was there now to deliberate, I ween,
 And shortly did Connel decree ;
 He shut up his mouth, and he closed his een,
 And he pointed his arms like a V,
 And like a scared otter, he dived in the Dee,
 His heels pointed up to the sky ;
 Like bolt from the firmament downward he bears,
 The still liquid element startled uprears,
 It bubbled and bullered and roared in his ears,
 Like thunder that gallovs on high.

XLI.

He soon four of the symptoms of drowning begin,
 And painful the feeling he sure,

For his breath it gaed out, and the water gaed in.
 With drumble and mudwart impure ;
 It was most unpleasant, and hard to endure,
 And he struggled its inroads to wear ;
 But it rushed by his mouth, and it rushed by his nose,
 „His joints grew benumbed, all his fingers and toes, --
 And his een turned, they neither would open nor close
 And he found his departure war. near.

XLII.

One time he came up, like a porpoise, above,
 He breathed and he lifted his eye,
 It was the last glance of the land of his love,
 Of the world, and the beautiful sky ;
 How bright looked the sun from his window on high
 Through furs of the light golden grain !
 O Connel was sad, but he thought with a sigh,
 That far above yon peaceful vales of the sky,
 In bowers of the morning he shortly might lie,
 Though very unlike it just then.

XLIII.

He sunk to the bottom, no more he arose,
 The waters for ever his body enclose ;
 The horse-mussel clasped on his fingers and toes,
 All passive he suffered the scathe.
 But O there was one thing his heart could not brook,
 Even in his last struggles, his spirit it shook,
 The eels, with their cursed equivocal look,
 Redoubled the horrors of death.
 O aye since the time that he was but a bairn,
 When catching his trouts in the Cluny, or Gairn,
 At sight of an eel he would shudder and darn -
 It almost deprived him of breath.

XLIV.

He died, but he found that he never would be
 So dead to all feeling and smart;
 No, not though his flesh were consumed in the Dec,
 But that eels would some horror impart.
 With all other fishes he yielded to mart,
 Resistance became not the dead ;
 The minnow, with gill-bet sae gouden and braw,
 The siller-ribbed perch, and the indolent crow,
 And the ravenous ged, with his teeth like a saw,
 Came all on poor Connel to feed.

XLV.

They rave and they rugged, he cared not a speal,
 Though they preyed on his vitals alone ;
 But, lord ! when he felt the cold nose of an eel,
 A quaking seized every bone ;
 Their slimy forms lay his bosom upon,
 His mouth that was ope, they came near ;
 They guddled his loins, and they bored thro' his side,
 They warped all his bowels about on the tide,
 One snapt him on place he no longer would bide.
 It was more than a dead man could bear !

* * * * *

XLVI.

Young Connel was missed, and his mother was sad,
 But his sisters consoled her mind ;
 And said, he was wooing some favourite maid,
 For Connel was amorous and kind.
 Ah ! little weened they that their Connel reclined
 On a couch that was lothful to see !
 'Twas mud !—and the water-bells o'er him did heave ,
 The lampreys passed thro' him without law or leave,
 And windowd his frame like a riddle or sieve,
 Aft in the deeps of the Dec !

XLVII.

It was but a night, and a midsummer night,
 And next morning when rose the red sun,
 His sisters in haste their fair bodies bedight,
 And, ere the day's work was begun,
 They sought for their Connel, for they were undone
 If ought should their brother befall :
 And first they went straight to the bower in the dean.
 For there he of late had been frequently seen ;
 For nature he loved, and her evening scene,
 To him was the dearest of all.

XLVIII.

And when within view of his bowrak they came,
 It lay in the skaddow so still,
 They lift up their voices and called his name,
 And their forms they shone white on the hill ;
 When trow you that hallo so erlich and shrill
 Arose from those maids on the heath ?
 It was just as poor Connel most poignant did feel,
 As reptiles he loved not of him made a meal,
 Just when the misleered and unmannerly eel
 Waked him from the slumbers of death.

XLIX.

He opened his eyes, and with wonder beheld
 The sky and the hills once again ;
 But still he was haunted, for over the field
 Two females came running amain.
 No form but his spouse's remained on his brain ;
 His sisters to see him were glad ;
 But he started bolt upright in horror and fear,
 He deem't that his wife and her minions were near,
 He flung off his plaid, and he fled like a deer,
 And they thought their poor brother was mair'.

L.

He 'scaped ; but he halted on top of the rock ;
 And his wonder and pleasure still grew ;
 For his clothes were not wet, and his skin was unbroke,
 But he scarce could believe it was true
 That no æls were within ; and too strictly he knew
 He was married and buckled for life.
 It could not be a dream ; for he slept, and awoke ;
 Was drunken, and sober ; had sung, and had spoke ;
 For months and for days he had dragged in the yoke
 With an unconscientious wife.

LI.

However it was, he was sure he was there,
 On his own native cliffs of the Dee.
 He never before looked a morning so fair,
 Or the sun-beam so sweet on the lea !
 The song of the merl from her old hawthorn tree,
 And the blackbird's melodious lay,
 All sounded to him like an anthem of love,
 A song that the spirit of nature did move,
 A kind little hymn to their Maker above,
 Who gave them the beauties of day.

LII.

So deep the impression was stamped on his brain,
 The image was never defaced ;
 Whene'er he saw riders that gallopped amain,
 He darned in some bush till they passed.
 At kirk or at market sharp glances he cast,
 Lest haply his wife might be there ;
 And once, when the liquor had kindled his ee,
 It never was known who or what he did see,
 But he made a miraculous flight from Dundee,
 The moment he entered the fair. •

LIII.

But never again was his bosom estranged,
From his simple and primitive fare ;
No longer his wishes or appetite ranged
With the gay and voluptuous to share.
He viewed every luxury of life as a snare ;
He drank of his pure mountain spring ;
He watched all the flowers of the wild as they sprung ;
He blessed his sweet laverock, like fairy that sung,
Aloft on the hem of the morning cloud hung,
Light fanning its down with her wing.

LIV.

And oft on the shelve of the rock he reclined,
Light carolling humourous rhyme,
Of his midsummer dream, of his feelings refined.
Or some song of the good olden time.
And even in age was his spirit in prime.
Still revered on Dee is his name !
His wishes were few, his enjoyments were rife,
He loved and he cherished each thing that had life.
With two small exceptions, an cel and a wife,
Whose commerce he dreaded the same.

COUNTRY DREAMS AND APPARITIONS.

No III.

THE WIFE OF LOCHMABEN.

Not many years ago, there lived in the ancient royal borough of Lochmaben, an amiable and good christian woman, the wife of a blacksmith, named James Neil, whose death gave rise to a singularly romantic story, and finally to a criminal trial at the Circuit-Court of Dumfries. The story was related to me by a strolling gipsy of the town of Lochmaben, pretty nearly as follows :

The smith's wife had been for several years in a state of great bodily suffering and debility, which she bore with all resignation, and even cheerfulness, although during the period of her illness, she had been utterly neglected by her husband, who was of a loose profligate character, and in every thing the reverse of his wife. Her hours were however greatly cheered by the company of a neighbouring widow, of the same devout and religious cast of mind with herself. These two spent most of their time together, taking great delight in each other's society. The widow attended to all her friend's little wants, and often watched by her bed a good part of the night, reading to her out of the Bible and other religious books, and giving every instance of disinterested kindness and attention.

The gallant blacksmith was all this while consoling himself in the company of another jolly buxom quean, of the tinker breed, who lived in an apartment under the same roof with him and his spouse. He seldom visited the latter ; but, on pretence of not disturbing her, both boarded and lodged with his swarthy Egyptian. Nevertheless, whenever the two devout friends said their evening prayers, the blacksmith was

not forgotten, but every blessing besought to rest on his head.

One morning, when the widow came in about the usual hour, to visit her friend, she found, to her utter astonishment, that she was gone, though she had been very ill the preceding night. The bed-clothes were cold, the fire on the hearth was gone out, and a part of her daily wearing apparel was lying at the bed side as usual.

She instantly ran and informed the smith. But he hated this widow, and answered her churlishly, without deigning to look up to her, or so much as delaying his work for a moment to listen to her narrative. There he stood, with his sleeves rolled up to his shoulders, pelting away at his hot iron, and bidding his informant “gang to the devil, for an auld fraizing hypocritical jade; an’ if she didna find her praying snivelling crony there, to seek her where she saw her last— If she didna ken where she was, how was he to ken?”

The widow alarmed the neighbours, and a general search was instantly set on foot; but, before that time, the body of the lost woman had been discovered floating in the middle of the Loch adjoining the town. Few people paid any attention to the unfortunate circumstance. They knew, or believed, that the woman lived unhappily and in bad terms with her husband, and had no doubt that she had drowned herself in a fit of despair; and, impressed with all the horror that country people naturally have of suicide, they refused her the rights of Christian burial. The body was, in consequence, early next morning, tied between two dales, and carried out to the height, several miles to the westward of the town, where it was consigned to a dishonourable grave; being deep buried precisely in the march, or boundary, between the lands of two different proprietors.

Time passed away, and the gossips of Lochmaben were very free both with the character of the deceased and her surviving

husband, not forgetting his jolly Egyptian. The more profligate part of the inhabitants said, "they never saw ony good come o' sac muckle canting an' praying, an' singing o' psalms; an' that for a' the wife's high pretensions to religious zeal, an' faith, an' hope, an' a' the lave o't, there she had gien hersel up to the deil-at ae smack." But the more serious part of the community only shook their heads, and said, "alas, it was hard kenning fouk frae outward appearances; for nane wha kend that wife wad hae expectit sic an end as this!"

But the state of the widow's mind after this horrible catastrophe, is not to be described. Her confidence in the mercy of Heaven was shaken; and she began to doubt of its justice. Her faith was stunned, and she felt her heart bewildered in its researches after truth. For several days she was so hardened, that she dared not fall on her knees before the footstool of divine grace. But after casting all about, and finding no other hold or anchor, she again, one evening, in full bitterness of heart, kneeled before her Maker, and poured out her spirit in prayer; begging, that if the tenets she held, were tenets of error, and disapproved of by the fountain of life, she might be forgiven, and directed in the true path to Heaven.

When she had finished, she sat down on her lowly form, leaned her face upon both her hands, and wept bitterly, as she thought of the dismal exit of her beloved friend, with whom she had last prayed. As she sat thus, she heard the footsteps of one approaching her, and looking up, she beheld her friend whom she supposed to have been dead and buried, standing on the floor, and looking to her with a face of so much mildness and benignity, that the widow, instead of being terrified, was rejoiced to see her. The following dialogue then passed between them, as nearly as I could gather it from the confused narrative of a strolling gipsy, who however knew all the parties.

“ God of mercy preserve us, Mary, is that you? Where have you been? We thought it had been you that was found drowned in the Loch.”

“ And who did you think drowned me?”

“ We thought you had drowned yourself.”

“ Oh, fie! how could *you* do me so much injustice? Would that have been ought in conformity to the life we two have led together, and the sweet heavenly conversation we maintained?”

“ What could we say? Or what could we think? The best are sometimes left to themselves. But where have you been Mary?”

“ I have been on a journey far away.”

“ But why did you go away without informing me?”

“ I was hurried away, and had no time.”

“ But you were so ill, how could you go away?”

“ I am better now. I never was so well in my life, no not in the gayest and happiest hour I ever saw. My husband cured me.”

“ How did he cure you?”

“ With a bottle.”

“ Why then did he not inform us? I cannot comprehend this. Where have you been, Mary?”

“ I have been on a journey at a strange place. But you do not know it, my dear friend. You know only the first stage at which I rested on my way, and a cold damp lodging it is. It was at a place called the Crane Moor.”

“ Heaven defend us! That was the name of the place where they buried the body that was found in the Loch. Tell me implicitly, Mary, were you not dead?”

“ How can you ask such a question? Do you not see me alive, and well, and cheerful, and happy?”

“ I know and believe that the soul can never die; but strange realities come over my mind. Tell me, was it not

your body that was found floating in the Loch, and buried in shame and disgrace on the top of the Crane Moor."

"You have so far judged right; but I am raised from the dead, as you see, and restored to life, and it is all for your sake; for the faith of the just must not perish. How could *you* believe that I would throw away my precious soul, by taking away my own life? My husband felled me with a bottle on the back part of the head, breaking my skull. He then put my body into a sack, carried it out in the dark, and threw it into the Loch. It was a deed of atrocity and guilt, but he will live to repent it, and it has proved a deed of mercy to me. I am well, and happy; and all that we believed of a Saviour and a future state of existence is true."—

On receiving this extraordinary information, and precisely at this part of the dialogue, the widow fainted; and on recovering from her swoon, she found that her friend was gone; but, conscious of having been in her perfect senses, and remembering every thing that had passed between them, she was convinced that she had seen and conversed with her deceased friend's ghost, or some good benevolent spirit in her likeness.

Accordingly, the next morning, she went to a magistrate, and informed him of the circumstances; but he only laughed her to scorn, and entreated her, for her own sake, never again to mention the matter, else people would account her mad. She offered to make oath before witnesses, to the truth of every particular; but this only increased the chagrin of the man in office, and the worthy widow was dismissed with many bitter reproaches. She next went to the minister, and informed him of what she had seen and heard. He answered her kindly, and with caution; but ultimately strove only to reason her from her belief; assuring her, that it was the effect of a dis-tempered imagination, and occasioned by reflecting too deeply on the unfortunate end of her beloved friend; and his reason-

ing being too powerful for her to answer, she was obliged to give up the point.

She failed not, however, to publish the matter among her neighbours, relating the circumstances in that firm serious manner in which a person always stands to the truth, thereby making an impression on the minds of every one who heard her. The story was of a nature to take, among such a society as that of which the main bulk of the population of Lochmaben and its vicinity consists. It flew like wild-fire. The people blamed their magistrates and ministers; and on the third day after the appearance of the deceased, they rose in a body, and with two ministers, two magistrates, and two surgeons at their head, they marched away to the Crane-moor, and lifted the corpse for inspection.

To the astonishment of all present, it appeared on the very first examination, that the deceased had been felled by a stroke on the back part of the head, which had broken her skull, and occasioned instant death. Little cognizance had been taken of the affair at her death; but, at any rate, her long hair was folded so carefully over the wound, and bound with a snood so close to her head, that without a minute investigation, the fracture could not have been discovered. Farther still, in confirmation of the words of the apparition, on the surgeon's opening the head, it appeared plainly from the semi-circular form of the fracture, that it had actually been inflicted by one side of the bottom of a bottle; and there being hundreds of respectable witnesses to all these things, the body was forthwith carried to the church-yard, and interred there; the smith was seized, and conveyed to jail; and the inhabitants of Annandale were left to wonder in the utmost astonishment.

The smith was tried at the ensuing Circuit-court of Dumfries, where the widow was examined as a principal witness. She told her story before the judges with firmness, and swore to every circumstance communicated to her by the ghost; and

even when cross-examined by the prisoner's counsel, she was not found to prevaricate in the least. The jury appeared to be staggered, and could not refuse their assent to the truth of this relation. The counsel, however, obviated this proof, on account of its being related at second hand, and not by an eye-witness of the transaction. He therefore refused to admit it against his client, unless the ghost appeared personally, and made a verbal accusation; and, being a gentleman of a sarcastic turn, he was but too successful in turning this part of the evidence into ridicule, thereby quite, or in a great measure, undoing the effect that it had made on the minds of the jury.

A material witness being still wanting, the smith was remanded back to prison until the Autumn circuit, at which time his trial was concluded. The witness above mentioned having then been found, he stated to the court, That as he chanced to pass the prisoner's door, between one and two in the morning of that day on which the deceased was found in the loch, he heard a noise as of one forcing his way out; and, wondering who it could be that was in the house at that hour, he had the curiosity to conceal himself in an adjoining door, until he saw who came out: That the night being very dark, he was obliged to crou down almost close to the earth, in order that he might have the object between him and the sky; and, while sitting in that posture, he saw a man come out of the smith's house, with something in a sack upon his back: That he followed the figure for some time, and intended to have followed farther; but he was seized with an indescribable terror, and went away home; and that, on the morning, when he heard of the dead body being found in the loch, he entertained not a doubt of the smith having murdered his wife, and then conveyed her in a sack to the loch. On being asked, If he could aver upon oath, that it was the prisoner whom he saw come out of the house bearing the burden—

He said he could not, because the burden which he carried, caused the person to stoop, and prevented him from seeing his figure distinctly; but, that it was him, he had no doubt remaining on his mind. On being asked why he had not divulged this sooner and more publicly; he said, that he was afraid the business in which he was engaged that night might have been inquired into, which it was of great consequence to him at that time to keep secret; and, therefore, he was not only obliged to conceal what he had seen, but to escape for a season out of the way, for fear of being examined.

The crime of the prisoner appeared now to be obvious; at least the presumption was strong against him. Nevertheless the judge, in summing up the evidence, considered the proof as defective; expatiated at considerable length on the extraordinary story related by the widow, which it could not be denied had been the occasion of bringing the whole to light, and had been most wonderfully exemplified by corresponding facts; and said he considered himself bound to account for it in a natural way, for the satisfaction of his own mind and the minds of the jury, and could account for it in no other, than by supposing that the witness had discovered the fracture before the body of her friend had been consigned to the grave; and that, on considering leisurely and seriously the various circumstances connected with the fatal catastrophe, she had become convinced of the prisoner's guilt, and had either fancied, or, more probably, dreamed the story, on which she had dwelt so long, that she believed it as a fact.

After all, the jury, by a small majority, returned a verdict of *not proven*; and, after a severe reprehension and suitable exhortations, the smith was dismissed from the bar. I forgot to mention in its proper place, that one of the principal things in his favour was, that of his abandoned innamorata having made oath that he was in her apartment all that night, and never left it.

He was now acquitted in the eye of the law, but not in the eyes of his countrymen ; for all those who knew the circumstances, believed him guilty of the murder of his wife. On the very night of his acquittal, he repaired at a late hour to the abode of his beloved Egyptian ; but he was suspected, and his motions watched with all due care. Accordingly, next morning, at break of day, a large mob, who had assembled with all quietness, broke into the house, and dragged both the parties from the same den ; and, after making them ride the stang through all the principal streets of the town, threw them into the loch, and gave them a complete ducking, suffering them barely to escape with life. At the same time, on their dismissal, they were informed, that if they continued in the same course of life, the experiment would be very frequently repeated. Shortly after that, the two offending delinquents made a moonlight flitting, and escaped into Cumberland. My informant had not heard more of them, but she assured me they would make a bad end.

COUNTRY DREAMS AND APPARITIONS.

No IV.

COUSIN MATTIE.

AT the lone farm of Finagle, there lived for many years an industrious farmer and his family. Several of his children died, and only one daughter and one son remained to him. He had besides these, a little orphan niece, who was brought into the family, called Matilda ; but all her days she went by the familiar name of Cousin Mattie. At the time

this simple narrative commences, Alexander, the farmer's son, was six years of age, Mattie was seven, and Flora, the farmer's only daughter, about twelve.

How I do love a little girl about that age ! There is nothing in nature so fascinating, so lovely, so innocent ; and, at the same time, so full of gayety and playfulness. The tender and delicate affections, to which their natures are moulded, are then beginning unconsciously to form ; and every thing beautiful or affecting in nature, claims from them a deep but momentary interest. They have a tear for the weaned lamb, for the drooping flower, and even for the travelling mendicant, though afraid to come near him. But the child of the poor female vagrant, is to them, of all others, an object of the deepest interest. How I have seen them look at the little wretch and then at her own parents alternately, the feelings of the soul abundantly conspicuous in every muscle of the face and turn of the eye ! Their hearts are like softened wax, and the impressions then made on them remain for ever. Such beings approach nigh to the list where angels stand, and are, in fact, the connecting link that joins us with the inhabitants of a better world. How I do love a well-educated little girl of twelve or thirteen years of age.

At such an age was Flora of Finagle, with a heart moulded to every tender impression, and a memory so retentive, that whatever affected or interested her was engraven there never to be cancelled:

One morning, after her mother had risen and gone to the byre to look after the cows, Flora, who was lying in a bed by herself, heard the following dialogue between the two children, who were lying prattling together in another bed close beside her's.

“ Do you ever dream ony, little Sandy ? ”

‘ What is’t like, cousin Mattie ? Sandy no ken what it is til deam.

“ It is to think ye do things when you are sleeping, when ye dinna do them at a’.”

‘ O, Sandy deam a geat deal yat way.’

“ If you will tell me ane o’ your dreams, Sandy—I’ll tell you ane o’ mine that I dreamed last night ; and it was about you, Sandy ?”

‘ Sae was mine, cousin. Sandy deamed that he fightit a gaet Englishman, an’ it was Yobin Hood ; an’ Sandy ding’d him’s swold out o’ him’s hand, an’ noll’d him on ye face, an’ ye back, till him geetit. An’ yen thele comed anodel littel despelyate Englishman, an’ it was littel John ; an’ Sandy fightit him till him was dead ; an’ yen Sandy got on o’ ane gyand holse, an’ gallompit away.’

“ But I wish that ye be nae making that dream just e’en now, Sandy ?”

‘ Sandy ’hought it, atweel.’

“ But were you sleeping when you thought it ?”

‘ Na, Sandy wasna’ sleepin’, but him was winking.’

“ O, but that’s not a true dream, I’ll tell you one that’s a true dream. I thought there was a bonny lady came to me, and she held out two roses, a red one and a pale one, and bade me take my choice. I took the white one ; and she bade me keep it, and never part with it, for if I gave it away, I would die. But when I came to you, you asked my rose, and I refused to give you it. You then cried for it, and said I did not love you ; so I could not refuse you the flower, but wept too, and you took it.

“ Then the bonny lady came back to me, and was very angry, and said, ‘ Did not I tell you to keep your rose ? Now the boy that you have given it to will be your murderer. He will kill you ; and on this day fortnight, you will be lying in your coffin, and that pale rose upon your breast.’

“ I said, ‘ I could not help it now.’ But when I was told that you were to kill me, I liked you aye better and better,

and better and better." And with these words, Matilda clasped him to her bosom and wept. Sandy sobbed bitterly too; and said, 'She be geat lial, yon lady. Sandy no kill cousin Mattie. When Sandy gows byaw man, an' gets a gyand house, him be vely good till cousin, an' feed hel wi' ginge-bead, an' yeam, an' tyankil, an' take hel in him's bosy yis way.' With that the two children fell silent, and sobbed and wept till they fell sound asleep, clasped in each other's arms.

This artless dialogue made a deep impression on Flora's sensitive heart. It was a part of her mother's creed to rely on dreams, so that it had naturally become Flora's too. She was shocked, and absolutely terrified, when she heard her little ingenious cousin say that Sandy was to murder her; and that on that day fortnight, she should be lying in her coffin; and without informing her mother of what she had overheard, she resolved in her own mind, to avert, if possible, the impending evil. It was on a Sabbath morning, and after little Sandy had got on his clothes, and while Matilda was out, he attempted to tell his mother cousin Mattie's dream, to Flora's great vexation; but he made such a blundering story of it, that it proved altogether incoherent, and his mother took no further notice of it than to bid him hold his tongue; "what was that he was speaking about murdering?"

The next week Flora intreated of her mother, that she would suffer cousin Mattie and herself to pay a visit to their aunt at Kirkmichael; and, though her mother was unwilling, she urged her suit so earnestly, that the worthy dame was fain to consent.

"What's ta'en the gowk lassie the day?" said she; "I think she be gane fey. I pever could get her to gang to see her aunt, an' now she has ta'en a tirrovy in her head, that she'll no be keepit. I dinna' like sic absolute freaks, un' sic langings, to come into the heads o' bairns; they're ayre often afore something uncannie. Gae your ways an' see your

auntie, sin' ye will gang; but ye's no get little cousin w'ye, sae never speak o't. Think ye that I can do wantin' ye baith out o' the house till the Sabbath-day be ower."

"O but, mother, it's sae gousty, an' sae eiry, to lie up in yow' loft ane's lane; unless eousin Mattie gang wi' me, I canna' gang ava."

"Then just stay at hame, daughter, an' let us alane o' thae daft nories a' thegither."

Flora now had resource to that expedient which never fails to conquer the opposition of a fond mother: she pretended to cry bitterly. The good dame was quite overcome, and at once yielded, though not with a very good grace. "Saw ever ony body sic a fie-gae-to as this? They that will to Cupar maun to Cupar! Gae your ways to Kirkmichael, an' tak the hale town at your tail, gin ye like. What's this that I'm sped wi'."

"Na, na, mother; I's no gang my foot-length. Ye sanna hae that to flyre about. Ye keep me working frae the tae year's end to the tither, an' winna gie me a day to mysel'. I's no seek to be away again, as lang as I'm aneath your roof."

"Whisht now, an' haud your tongue, my bonny Flora. Ye hae been ower good a bairn to me, no to get your ain way o' ten times mair nor that. Ye ken laith wad your mother be to contrair you i' ought, if she wist it war for your good. I'm right glad that it has come i' your ain side o' the house, to gang an' see your auntie. Gang your ways, an' stay a day or twa; if ye dinna like to sleep your lane, take billy Sandy w'ye, an' leave little Cousin wi' me, to help me wi' bits o' turns till ye come back."

This arrangement, suiting Flora's intent equally well with the other, it was readily agreed to, and every thing soon amicably settled between the mother and daughter. The former demurred a little on Sandy's inability to perform the journey; but Flora, being intent on her purpose, overruled this objection, though she knew it was but too well founded.

Accordingly, the couple set out on their journey next morning, but before they were half way, Sandy began to tire, and a short time after gave fairly in. Flora carried him on her back for a space, but finding that would never do, she tried to cajole him into further exertion. No, Sandy would not set a foot to the ground. He was grown drowsy, and would not move. Flora knew not what to do, but at length fell upon an expedient, which an older person would scarcely have thought of. She went to a gate of an enclosure, and, pulling a spoke out of it, she brought that to Sandy, telling him she had now got him a fine horse, and he might ride all the way. Sandy, who was uncommonly fond of horses, swallowed the bait, and, mounting astride on his rung, he took the road at a round pace, and for the last two miles of their journey, Flora could hardly keep in view of him.

She had little pleasure in her visit, farther than the satisfaction, that she was doing what she could to avert a dreadful casualty, which she dreaded to be hanging over the family; and on her return, from the time that she came in view of her father, she looked only for the appearance of Mattie running about the door; but no Mattie being seen, Flora's heart began to tremble, and as she advanced nearer, her knees grew so feeble, that they would scarcely support her slender form; for she knew that it was one of the radical principles of a dream to be ambiguous.

"A's unco still about our hame day, Sandy; I wish ilka ane there may be weel. It's like death."

"Sandy no ken what death is like. What is like, Sistel Flola?"

"You will maybe see that ower soon. It is death that kills a' living things, Sandy."

"Aye; aih aye! Sandy saw a wee buldie, it could neivel pick, nol flee, nol dab. It was vely ill done o' death! Sistel Flola, didna God make a' living things?"

"Yes; be assured he did."

'Then, what has death ado to kill them? if Sandy wele God, him wad fight him.'

"Whisht, whisht, my dear; ye dinna ken what you're sayin. Ye maunna speak about these things."

'Weel, Sandy no speak ony maile about them. But if death should kill cousin Mattie, Oh! Sandy wish him might kill him too!'

"Wha do ye like best i' this world, Sandy?"

'Sandy like sistel Flola best.'

"You are learning the art of flattery already; for I heard ye telling Mattie the tither morning, that ye likit her better than a' the rest o' the world put thegither."

'But yan Sandy coudna help yat. Cousin Mattie like Sandy, and what could him say?'

Flora could not answer him for anxiety; for they were now drawing quite near to the house, and still all was quiet. At length Mattie opened the door, and, without returning to tell her aunt the joyful tidings, came running like a little fairy to meet them; gave Flora a hasty kiss; and then, clasping little Sandy about the neck, she exclaimed, in an ecstatic tone, "Aih, Sandy man!" and pressed her cheek to his. Sandy produced a small book of pictures, and a pink rose knot that he had bought for his cousin, and was repaid with another embrace, and a sly compliment to his gallantry.

Matilda was far beyond her years in acuteness. Her mother was an accomplished English lady, though only the daughter of a poor curate, and she had bred her only child with every possible attention. She could read, she could sing, and play some airs on the spinnet; and was altogether a most interesting little nymph. Both her parents came to an untimely end, and to the lone cottage of Finagle was she then removed, where she was still very much caressed. She told Flora all the news of her absence in a breath. There was

nothing disastrous had happened. But, so strong was Flora's presentiment of evil, that she could not get quit of it, until she had pressed the hands of both her parents. From that day forth, she suspected that little faith was to be put in dreams. The fourteen days was now fairly over, and no evil nor danger had happened to Matilda, either from the hand of Sandy or otherwise. However, she kept the secret of the dream locked up in her heart, and never either mentioned or forgot it.

Shortly after that, she endeavoured to reason her mother out of her belief in dreams, for she would still gladly have been persuaded in her own mind, that this vision was futile, and of no avail. But she found her mother staunch to her point. She reasoned on the principle, that the Almighty had made nothing in vain, and if dreams had been of no import to man, they would not have been given to him. And further, she said, we read in the Scriptures that dreams were fulfilled in the days of old; but we didna read in the Scriptures that ever the nature of dreaming was changed. On the contrary, she believed, that since the days of prophecy had departed, and no more warnings of futurity could be derived to man from that, dreaming was of doubly more avail, and ought to be proportionally more attended to, as the only mystical communication remaining between God and man. To this reasoning Flora was obliged to yield. It is no hard matter to conquer, where belief succeeds argument.

Time flew on, and the two children were never asunder. They read together, prayed together, and toyed and caressed without restraint, seeming but to live for one another. But a heavy misfortune at length befel the family. She who had been a kind mother and guardian angel to all the three, was removed by death to a better home. Flora was at that time in her eighteenth year, and the charge of the family devolved on her. Great was their grief, but their happiness.

was nothing abated; they lived together in the same kind love and amity as they had done before. The two youngest in particular fondled each other more and more; and this growing fondness, instead of being checked, was constantly encouraged,—Flora still having a lurking dread that some deadly animosity might breed between them.

Matilda and she always slept in the same bed, and very regularly told each other their dreams in the morning,—dreams pure and innocent as their own stainless bosoms. But one morning Flora was surprised by Matilda addressing her as follows, in a tone of great perplexity and distress :

“ Ah! my dear cousin, what a dream I have had last night! I thought I saw my aunt, your late worthy mother, who was kind and affectionate to me, as she always wont to be, and more beautiful than I ever saw her. She took me in her arms, and wept over me; and charged me to go and leave this place instantly, and by all means to avoid her son, otherwise he was destined to be my murderer; and on that day seven-night I should be lying in my coffin. She showed me a sight too that I did not know, and cannot give a name to. But the surgeons, with their bloody hands, came between us, and separated us, so that I saw her no more.”

Flora trembled and groaned in spirit; nor could she make any answer to Matilda for a long space, save by repeated moans. “ Merciful Heaven!” said she at length, “ what can such a dream portend? Do not you remember, dear Mattie, of dreaming a dream of the same nature once long ago?”

Mattie had quite forgot of ever having dreamed such a dream, but Flora remembered it well; and thinking that she might formerly have been the mean, under Heaven, of counterworking destiny, she determined to make a farther effort; and, ere ever she arose, advised Matilda to leave the house, and avoid her brother, until the seven days had elapsed.

“ It can do nae ill, Mattie,” said she; “ an’ mankind

hae whiles muckle i' their ain hands to do or no to do; to bring about, or to keep back." Mattie consented, solely to please the amiable Flora; for she was no more afraid of Sandy than she was of one of the flowers of the field. She went to Kirkmichael, staid till the week was expired, came home in safety, and they both laughed at their superstitious fears. Matilda thought of the dream no more, but Flora treasured it up in her memory, though all the coincidence that she could discover between the two dreams was, that they had both happened on a Saturday, and both precisely at the same season of the year; which she well remembered.

At the age of two and twenty, Flora was married to a young farmer, who lived in a distant corner of the same extensive parish, and of course left the charge of her father's household to cousin Mattie, who, with the old farmer, his son, and one maid-servant, managed and did all the work of the farm. Still, as their number was diminished, their affections seemed to be drawn the closer; but Flora scarcely saw them any more, having the concerns of a family to mind at home.

One day, when her husband went to church, he perceived the old beadle standing bent over his staff at the churchyard gate, distributing burial letters to a few as they entered. He held out one to the husband of Flora, and, at the same time, touched the front of his bonnet with the other hand; and, without regarding how the letter affected him who received it, began instantly to look about for others to whom he had letters directed.

The farmer opened the letter, and had almost ~~unk~~ sunk down on the earth when he read as follows:

SIR,—The favour of your company, at twelve o'clock, on Tuesday next, to attend the funeral of Matilda A——n, my niece, from this, to the place of interment, in the church-yard of C——r, will much oblige, Sir, your humble servant;

Finagle, April 12th.

James A——

Think of Flora's amazement and distress, when her husband told her what had happened, and shewed her this letter. She took to her bed on the instant, and wept herself into a fever, for the friend and companion of her youth. Her husband became considerably alarmed on her account, she being in that state in which violent excitement often proves dangerous. Her sickness was however only temporary ; but she burned with impatience to learn some particulars of her cousin's death. Her husband could tell her nothing ; only, that he heard one say *she died on Saturday.*

This set Flora a calculating, and going over in her mind the reminiscences of their youth ; and she soon discovered, to her utter astonishment and even horror, that her cousin Matilda had died precisely on *that day fourteen years* that she first dreamed the ominous dream ; and that day seven years that she dreamed it again !

Here was indeed matter of wonder ! But her blood ran cold to her heart when she thought what might have been the manner of her death. She dreaded, nay, she almost calculated upon it as certain, that her brother had poisoned, or otherwise made away privately with the deceased, as she was sure such an extraordinary coincidence behoved to be fulfilled in all its parts. She durst no more make any inquiries concerning the circumstances of her cousin's death ; but she became moping and unsettled, and her husband feared for her reason.

He went to the funeral ; but dreading to leave Flora long by herself, he only met the procession a small space from the church-yard ; for his father-in-law's house was distant fourteen miles from his own. On his return, he could still give Flora very little additional information. He said he had asked his father-in-law what had been the nature of the complaint of which she died ; but he had given him an equivocal answer, ~~he seemed to avoid~~ *he seemed to avoid* entering into any explanation ; and that he had then made inquiry at others, who all testified their

mer, what was the corpse like? Was't a' fair, an' bonny, an' nae blueness nor demmish to be seen?"

"An' what wad an auld fool body like you be the better, gin ye kend what the corpse was like? Thae sights are nae for een like yours to see; an' thae subjects are nae fit for tongues like yours to tattle about. What's done canna be undone. The dead will lie still. But oh, what's to come o' the living!"

"Aye, but I'm sure she had been a lusty weel plenished corpse, Janet; for she was a heavy ane; an' a deeper coffin I never saw."

"Haud your auld souple untackit tongue. Gin I hear sic another hint come ower the foul tap o't, it sal be the waur for ye. But lown be it spoken, an' little be it said. Weel might the corpse be heavy, an' the coffin deep! ay, weel might the coffin be made deep, Matthew; for there was a stout lad bairn, a poor little pale flower, that hardly ever saw the light o' heaven, was streekit on her breast at the same time wi' hersel'.

* * * * *

COUNTRY DREAMS AND APPARITIONS.

No V.

WELLDEAN HALL.

"Do you believe this story of the ghost, Gilbert?" "Do I believe this story of the ghost? Such a question as that is not for me! How many will you answer me in exchange for my ingenious answer to that most exquisite question? You see

that tree there. Do you believe that it grew out of the earth? Or do you believe that it is there at all? Secondly, and more particularly, You see me? Good. You see my son at the plow yonder. What do you believe yon boy to be? Do you believe he is a twig of hazel?

"How can I believe that, old shatterbrains?"

"I'll prove it. What does a hazel twig spring from at first?"

"A nut, or filbert, you may choose to call it."

"Good. Now, which letter of the alphabet begins my name?"

"The seventh."

"Good. Your own sentence. Look at the hornbook. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. You have it home. My son sprung from a filbert. Satisfied? Ha, ha, ha! Another. Do you believe Old Nick to be a simpleton? A ninny? A higgler for nits and nest-eggs? An even down nose-o'-wax—not possessed of half the sense, foresight, and calculation that's in my one eye? In short, do you believe that both the devil and you are fools, and that Gilbert Falconer is a wise man?"

"There's no speaking seriously to you about any thing, with your low miserable attempts at wit."

"I'll prove it."

"No more of your proofs, else I am off."

"I was coming to the very point which you set out at, if you would have suffered me. I would have come to a direct answer to your question in less than forty minutes. But it is all one. Odds or evens, who of us two shall conform to Solomon's maxim."

"What maxim of Solomon's?"

"Answer a fool according to his folly. What say you?"

"Odds."

"I have lost. The wit, the humour, the fire, the spirit, of our afternoon's conversation is at an end. Wit!

Wit! Thou art a wreck—a lumber—a spavined jade! Now for a rhyme, and I'm done.

“ Ò Gilbert Falconer!
 Thou hast made a hack on her!
 For Nick is on the back on her!
 Who was't spurr'd her last away?
 Bear him, bear him fast away;
 Or Nick will be a cast-away!”

Is the fit done yet? In the name of all that is rational let us have some respite from that torrent of words, that resemble nothing so much as a water-spout, that makes a constant rumbling noise, without any variation or meaning. I wanted to have some serious talk with you about this. The family are getting into the utmost consternation. What can be the meaning of it? Do you believe that such a thing as the apparition of our late master has been seen?”

“ Indeed old Nicholas, seriously, I do believe it. How can I believe otherwise?”

“ Don't you rather think it is some illusion of the fancy—that the people are deceived, and their senses have imposed on them?”

“ A man has nothing but his external senses to depend on in this world. If these may be supposed fallacious, what is to be considered as real that we either hear or see? I conceive, that if a man *believes* that he *does* see an object standing before his eyes, and knows all its features and lineaments, why, he *does* see it, let casuists say what they will. If he *hears* it pronounce words audibly, who dare challenge the senses that God has given him, and maintain that he heard no such words pronounced? I would account the man a presumptuous fool who would say so, or who would set any limits to the phenomena of nature, knowing in whose hand the

universe is balanced, and how little of it he thoroughly understands."

"Why, now, Gilbert, to have heard you speaking the last minute, would any man have believed that such a sentence could have come out of your mouth? That which you have said was certainly very well said; and more to the point than any thing I could have *thought* on the subject for I know not how long. So I find you think a ghost may sometimes be commissioned, or permitted to appear?"

"I have never once doubted it. Superstition has indeed peopled every dell with ideal spectres; but to these I attach no credit. If the senses of men, however, are in ought to be trusted, I cannot doubt that spirits have sometimes walked the earth in the likenesses of men and women that once lived. It is certainly not on any slight or trivial occasion, that such messengers from the dead appear; and, were it not for some great end, I would not believe in it. I conceive it to be only when all natural means are cut off, either of discovering guilt and blood, or of saving life. The idea of this is so pleasant, that I would not for the world misbelieve it. How grand is the conviction, that there is a being on your right hand and your left, that sees the actions of all his creatures, and will not let the innocent suffer, nor the guilty go unpunished!"

"I am so glad to hear you say so, Gilbert; for I had begun to dispute my own senses, and durst not tell what I had seen. I myself saw our late master, face to face, as plainly as I see you at this moment. And that no longer ago than the night before last."

"God have a care of us! Is it even so? Then I fear, old Nicholas, there has been some foul play going on. Where did you see him?"

"In the garden. He went into the house and beckoned me to follow him. 'I was on the point' of complying; for,

though I have been deeply troubled at thinking of it, I was not afraid at the time. The deceased had nothing ghostly about him; and I was so used to do all his commands, that I felt very awkward in declining this last one. How I have trembled to think about it! Is it not said and believed, Gilbert, that one who sees a spirit always dies in a very short time after?"

"I believe it is held as an adage."

"Oh dreadful! Then I shall soon meet him again. How awful a thing it is to go into a world of spirits altogether! And that so soon! Is there no instance of one who has seen a ghost living for any length of time afterwards?"

"No. I believe not."

"I wonder what he had ado in appearing to me? But he never liked me, and had always plenty of malice about him. I am very ill, Gilbert. Oh! oh! Lack-a-day!"

"O fie! Never think about that. You are as well dead as living, if it should be so. Much better."

"And is that all the lamentation you make for your old friend? Ah, Gilbert, life is sweet even to an old man! And though I wish all my friends happy that are gone, yet such happiness is always the last that I wish them. Oh! oh! Good bye, Gilbert. Farewell! It is hard to say when you and I may meet again."

"You are not going to leave me that way? Come, sit down, and let us lean our two old backs to this tree, and have some farther conversation about this wonderful occurrence. Tell me seriously, old Nick, or Father Adam, I should rather call you; for you delve a garden like him, and like him have been bilked by a lusty young quean. Tell me, I say, seriously, what you thought of the character of our late master, and what is your opinion of this our present one?"

"I do not think of either of them. Ah! there are many

doors to the valley of death, and they stand open day and night ! But there are few out of it !”

“ A plague on this old fellow, with his valley of death ! He thinks of nothing but his worthless carcass. I shall get no more sense out of him. I think, Father Adam, our young master is a wretch ; and I now dread our late one has not been much better. Think you the dog can have killed his uncle ? I fear he has. And I fear you have been privy to it, since you confess his ghost has appeared to you. Confess that you administered some of your herbs, some simples to him ; and that it was not an apoplexy of which he dropt down dead. Eh ! I do not wonder that you are afraid of the valley of death, if it is by a noose that you are to enter it.”

“ Poor fool ! poor fool !”

“ After all, is it not wonderful, Nicholas ? What can have brought our master back from the unseen world ? Do you think this nephew of his has had any hand in his death ? He has now got possession of all his lands, houses, and wealth, which I well believe never were intended for him ; while his younger brother Allan, and his lovely cousin, Swan Somerville, our late master’s chief favourite, are left without a farthing.”

“ The cause of our master’s death was perfectly ascertained by the surgeons. Though the present laird be a man without principle, I do not believe ever he harboured a thought of making away with his uncle.”

“ How comes it then that his spirit walks even while it is yet twilight, and the sun but shortly gone over the hill ? How comes it that his will has not been found ? And, if our young laird and his accomplices represent things aright, not one tenth of his great wealth ?”

“ Heaven knows ! It is a grievous and a mysterious matter.”

"I suppose this mansion will soon be locked up. We must all flit, Nicholson. Is it not conjectured that the laird has himself seen the apparition?"

"It is believed, that he encountered it in the library that night on which he grew so ill. He has never slept by himself since that night, and never again re-entered the library. All is to be sold; for the two young people claim their thirds of the moveables; and, as you say, we must all flit. But I need not care! Oh! Oh! Goodbye, Gilbert! Oh! Oh! I wonder what the ghost of the old miser—the old world's-worm, had ado to appear to me? To cut me off from the land of the living and the place where repentance may be hoped for! Oh! Oh! Farewell Gilbert."

Gilbert kept his eye on the bent frame of the old gardener, till a bend in the wood walk hid him from his view, and then he mimicked him for his own amusement, and indulged in a long course of laughter. Gilbert had been bred to the church, but his follies and irregularities drove him from the university. He attempted many things, and at last was engaged as butler and house-steward to the late laird of Welldean; but even there he was disgraced, and became a kind of hanger-on about the mansion, acting occasionally as wood-forester, or rather wood-cleaver; drank as much of the laird's strong beer as he could conveniently get; cracked profane jests with the servants and cottage-dames; talked of agriculture with the farmers; of Homer and Virgil with the school-master; and of ethics with Dr Leadbeater, the parish-minister. Gilbert was every body's body; but cared little for any one, knowing that few cared ought for him. He had nevertheless a good heart, and a mortal abhorrence of every thing tyrannical or unjust, as well as mean and sordid.

Old Welldean had lived a sober retired life, and was exceedingly rich; but was one of those men *who could in no wise part with money*. He had two nephews by a brother, and

one niece by a sister. It was known that he had once made a will, which both the writer and one of the witnesses attested; but he had been cut off suddenly, and neither the will, nor his accumulated treasures could be found, though many suspected, that the elder nephew, Randal, had concealed the one, and destroyed the other. As heir-at-law, he had seized on the whole property, and his brother Allan, and lovely cousin, Swan Somerville, two young and amiable lovers, found themselves deprived of that which they had been bred up to regard as their own. They claimed, of course, their share of the moveables, which the heir haughtily proposed to bring to the hammer. These were of considerable value. The library alone was judged to be worth a great sum, as it had descended from father to son, and still been increasing in value for several generations. But from the moment that an inventory began to be taken of the things of the house, which was nearly a year after the old laird's death, the family were driven into the utmost consternation by a visit of an apparition, exactly resembling their late master. It walked not only every night, but was sometimes seen in open day, encountering some with threatening gestures, and beckoning others to follow him.

These circumstances confirmed Randal in his resolution, not only to sell the furniture, but even to dispose of the house and policies, and purchase another place in lieu of it. It was supposed he had got a dreadful fright himself, but this circumstance he judged it proper to conceal, lest advantages might be taken of it by intending purchasers; and he now manifested the utmost impatience to bring the sales about.

Among other interested agents, two wealthy booksellers, Pinchport and Titlepage, were applied to as the best and most conscientious men in the world, to give a fair price for the valuable library. These sent an old book-monger to look over the library, and put down a certain value for every work. The man proceeded with great activity, and no less import-

ance. But one evening, as he approached an oaken bookcase in the middle of a large division, he perceived an old man standing before it, of a most forbidding and threatening aspect. The honest bibliopole bowed low to this mysterious intruder, who regarded him only with a frown, kept his position, and, holding up his right hand, shook it at him, as if daring him to approach nearer to that place.

The man of conscience began to look around him, for he had heard of the ghost, though he disregarded the story. The door was close shut ! It was impossible a mouse could have entered without him having perceived it. He looked at the old man again, and thought he discerned the spokes of the bookcase through his body ; and, at the same time, there appeared like a lambent flame burning within him.

The valuator of books made toward the door as fast as his loosened and yielding joints could carry him ; he even succeeded in opening it ; but, in his unparalleled haste to escape, he lost all manner of caution, and fell headlong over the oak-stair. In his fall, he uttered a horrible shriek, which soon brought the servants from the hall to his assistance. When they arrived, he had tumbled all the way to the bottom of the stair ; and, though all mangled and bleeding, he was still rolling and floundering onward, in order somewhat to facilitate his escape. They asked him, what was the matter ? His answer to them was, " The ghost, the ghost ;" and the honest bibliopole spoke not another word that any body could make sense of, for at least two months. One of his jaws was broke, which instantaneously swelling, deprived him of the power of utterance. He was besides much lacerated, and bruised, and fell into a dangerous fever. No explanation having thus been given of the circumstances of the adventure, the story soon spread, and assumed a character highly romantic, and no less uncommon. It was asserted, on the strongest evidence, that the ghost of the late laird had attacked an honest valuator of books in the

library, and tossed him down stairs, breaking every bone of his body. The matter began to wear a serious aspect, and the stoutest hearts about the mansion were chilled. A sort of trepidation and uncertainty was apparent in the look, gait, and whole demeanour of every one of the inhabitants. All of them were continually looking around, in the same manner that a man does who is afraid of being taken up for debt. The old housekeeper prayed without ceasing. Nicholas, the gardener, wept night and day, that he had so soon to go to heaven. Dr Leadbeater, the parish-minister, reasoned without end, how "immaterial substances might be imaged forth by the workings of a fancy overheated and bedimmed in its mental vision, until its optics were over-run with opacity; and, that visions thus arose from the discord of colours, springing from the proportions of the vibrations propagated through the fibres of the optic nerves into the brain;" and a thousand other arguments, replete no doubt with deep philosophy, but of which no one knew the bearing of a single point. As for Gibby, the wood-forester, he drank ale and laughed at the whole business, sometimes reasoning on the one side, sometimes on the other, precisely as the whim caught him.

Randal spent little of his time at the mansion. He was engaged running the career of dissipation, to which heirs are generally addicted, and grew every day more impatient to accomplish the sale of his uncle's effects at Weldean. Matters were at a stand. Ever since the misfortune of the bookman, farther proceeding there was none. Most people suspected a trick; but a trick having such serious consequences, was not a safe toy wherewith to dally. Randal lost all temper; and at last yielded to the solicitations of his domestics, to suffer the ghost to be spoken to, that the dead might have rest, as the housekeeper termed it.

Accordingly, he sent for Dr Leadbeater, the great metaphysical minister of the parish; and requested him to watch

a night in the library ; merely, as he said, to quiet the fears of the domestics, who had taken it into their heads that the house was haunted, and accordingly, all order and regularity was at an end among them.

“ Why, sir,” said Dr Leadbeater, “ as to my watching a night, that’s nothing. It is not that I would not watch ten nights to benefit your honour, either mainpernorly, laterally, or ultimately ; but the sequel of such a vigilancy, would be a thoroughfaring error, that by insidious vermiculation, would work itself into the moral, physical, and mental intestines of those under my charge, in abundant multiformity ; so that amaritude or acrimony might be deprehended in choler. But as to the appearance of any thing superhuman, I can assure you, sir, it is nothing more than a penumbra, and proceeds from some obtuse reflection, from a body superficially lustrous ; which body must be spherical, or polyedrical, and the protuberant particles cylindrical, elliptical, and irregular ; and according to the nature of these, and the situation of the lucid body, the sight of the beholder or beholders, from an angular point, will be affected figuratively and diametrically.”

“ Why, d——n it, doctor,” said Randal, “ that, I think, is all excellent philosophical reasoning. But in one word ; you pretend to hold your commission from Heaven ; and to be set there to watch over the consciences, and all the moral and religious concerns of your parishioners. Now, here is a family, consisting of nearly forty individuals, all thrown into the utmost consternation by what, it seems, according to your theory, is nothing more than an *obtuse reflection*. The people are absolutely in great distress, and on the point of losing their reason. I conceive it therefore your duty, as their spiritual pastor, either to remove this obtuse reflection out of the house, or quiet their apprehensions regarding it. One poor fellow has, I fear, got his death’s wounds from this same same peculiar reflection. Certainly the *polyedrical body* might be found out

and removed. In one word, doctor, will you be so good as attempt it, or will you not."

"I have attempted it already, worthy sir," said the doctor; "I have explained the whole nature of the deceptive refraction to you, which you may explain to them, you know."

"Thank you, doctor; I shall. 'It is an obtuse reflection,' you say, 'from a body spiritual, polyedrical, protuberant, cylindrical, elliptical and irregular.' D—n them, if they don't understand that, they deserve to be frightened out of their senses."

"Oh, you're a wag. You are witty. It may be very good, but I like not your wit."

"Like my uncle's ghost, doctor, rather *obtuse*. But faith, doctor, between you and me, I'll give you fifty guineas in a present, and as much good claret as you and an associate can drink, if you will watch a night in the library, and endeavour to find out what this is that disturbs the people of my establishment. But, doctor, it is only on this condition, that whatever you may discover in that library, you are to make it known only to me. My late uncle's hoards of wealth and legal bonds have not been discovered; neither has his will. I have a thought that both may be concealed in that apartment; and that the old miser has had some machinery contrived in his lifetime to guard his treasure. You understand me, doctor? It imports me much; whatever you discover, *I only* must be made privy to it. It is as well that my brother, and his conceited inamorata Swan, should be under my tutelage and direction, as rendered independent of me, and haply raised above me. Doctor, what would you think of a thousand pounds in your hand as the fruits of one night's watching in that library? You are superior I know to any dread of danger from the appearance of a spirit."

"Why, to tell you the truth, squire Randal, as to the emporculist, and his vertiginous gilt piece of mutability, to such

I have nothing to say, and with such I have nothing to do. But to better the fortune of my alderleivest friend, in reciprocation and alternateness with my own, squares as exactly with my views as the contents of an angle; which, in all rectangle triangles is made of the side that subtendeth the right angle, and is equal to the squares which are made of the sides containing the right angle; and this is a perfect definition of my predominant inclination. The discerptibility of fortune is not only admissible, but demonstratively certain, and whatever proves adminicular to its concentration is meritorious."

"I am rather at a loss, Dr Leadbeater."

"Your proposition, squire, as it deserveth, hath met with perfect acceptibility on my part. Only, instead of claret, let the beverage for my friend and me be hock."

"With all my heart, doctor."

"Fifty, at all events, for one night's watching; perhaps a thousand?"

"The precise terms, 'doctor.'"

Every thing being thus settled, the doctor sought him out an associate, and fixed on Mr Jinglekirk, an old man who, for want of a patron, had never been able to get a living in the church, though he had been for twenty years what is called a journeyman minister. He had a weak mind, and was addicted to tippling; but had nevertheless an honest and upright heart. The doctor, however, made choice of him, on account of his poverty and simplicity, thinking he could mould him to his will with ease, should any great discovery be made.

The next week, the reverend doctor sent word to Welldan, that he and a friend meant to visit there, to pray with the family, and watch over night, to peruse some books in the library, or rather to make choice of some, previous to the approaching sale. The two divines came; the laird kept purposely out of the way, but left directions with his brother Allan, to receive

and attend on them until after supper, and then leave them to themselves.

All the people assembled in the library, and Mr Jinglekirk performed family worship at the request of the doctor. Afterwards a plentiful supper, and various rich wines, were set, of which both the divines partook rather liberally. Allan remained with them during supper, but not perfectly at his ease, for he was at least next to convinced that there was something preternatural about the house;—something unaccountable he was sure there was.

After supper, chancing to lift his eyes to the old bookcase of black oak and glass, that stood exactly opposite to the fireplace, he perceived, or thought he perceived, the form of a hand pointing to a certain pane of glass in the book-case. He grew instantly as pale as ashes; on which both the divines turned their eyes in the same direction, but there was nothing. Even to Allan's eyes, there was nothing. The appearance of the hand was quite gone, and he was convinced it had been an illusion. They asked him, with some symptoms of perturbation, what he saw? But he assured them he saw nothing; only he said, he had not been very well of late, and was subject to sudden qualms—that one of these had seized him, and he would be obliged to wish them a good-night. They intreated him to remain till they finished the bottle, but he begged to be excused, and left them.

As soon as they were alone, the doctor began to sound Jinglekirk with regard to his principles of honesty, and mentioned to him the suspicion and the strong probability that the late old miser's treasures were all concealed in that library; and moreover, that even their host suspected that he had contrived some mechanical trick during his lifetime to guard that treasure, and it was thus that the servants, and even strangers, were frightened out of the apartment.

The reverend John Jinglekirk listened to all this with tacit

indifference, filled another glass of old hock, and acquiesced with his learned friend in the strong probability of all that he had advanced. But notwithstanding every hint that the doctor could give, John (as the other familiarly styled him,) would never utter a syllable indicative of a disposition to share the treasure with his liberal friend, or even to understand that such a thing was meant.

The doctor had therefore recourse to another plan, in which he was too sure of success. He toasted one bumper of wine after another, giving first, "the Church of Scotland," and then, some noblemen and gentlemen, particular friends of his, who had plenty of livings in their gift. Then such young ladies as were particularly beautiful, accomplished, and had *the clink*; in short, the very one's for clergyman's ladies. Jinglekirk delighted in these toasts, and was as liberal of them as his friend could wish, drinking deep bumpers to every one of them,

• Till his een they closed, an' his voice grew low,
An' his tongue wad hardly gang.'

At length he gave one whom he pronounced to be a *divine creature*, drank a huge bumper to her health, and then, leaning forward on the table, his head sank gradually down till it came in contact with his two arms, his tongue now and then pronouncing in a voice scarcely audible, "O, a divine creature! sweet! sweet! sweet! Ha-ha-ha! he-he-he!—Divine creature! Doctor—I shay—Is not she? Eh? O she's lovely and amiable! doctor—I shay—she's the sheaf among ten thousand!" and with that honest Jinglekirk composed himself to a quiet slumber.

The doctor now rose up to reconnoitre; and, walking round and round the library, began to calculate with himself where ~~it was~~ most likely old Welldean would conceal his treasure. His eyes and his contemplations very naturally fixed on the

old book-case of black oak. He had previously formed a firm resolution not to be surprised by any sudden appearance ; which, he conjectured, might be made by springs to start up on setting his foot on a certain part of the floor, or on opening a folding door. On the contrary, he conceived that any such appearance would be a certain evidence that the treasure was behind that, and in that place his research ought to be doubled.

Accordingly, without more ado, he went up to the old book-case. The upper two leaves were unlocked, as the man of books had left them. There were a few panes of thick, blue, navelled glass in each of them, while the transverse bars were curiously carved, and as black as ebony. "It is an antique and curious cabinet this, and must have many small concealments in it," said the doctor to himself, as he opened the door. He began to remove the books, one by one, from the left hand to the right, not to look at their contents, but to observe if there were any key-holes or concealed drawers behind them. He had only got half way along one shelf. The next three volumes were Latin classics, royal octavo size ; in boards, and unproportionally thick. He had just stretched out his hand to remove one of them, when he received from some unseen hand such a blow on some part of his body, he knew not where, but it was as if he had been struck by a thunder-bolt, that made him stagger some paces backward, and fall at full length on the floor. When he received the blow, he uttered the interrogative "What?" as loud as he could bawl ; and, as he fell to the floor, he uttered it again ; not louder ; for that was impossible ; but with more emphasis, and an inverted cadence, quite peculiar to a state of inordinate surprise.

These two startling cries, and the rumble that he made when falling, aroused the drowsy John Jinglekirk ; not only into a state of sensibility, but perfect accuracy of intellect. The first thing that he saw was his reverend friend raising

up his head from the foot of the table, staring wildly about him.

“ John—What was that ?” said he.

“ I had some thought it was your reverence,” said Jinglekirk.

“ But who was it that knocked me down ? John, was it you who had the presumption to strike me down by such a blow as that ?”

“ Me, doctor ? I offer to knock you down ? I think you might know I would be the last man in the world who would presume to do such a thing. But simply and honestly, was it not this fellow who did it ?” And with that Jinglekirk pointed to the wine bottle ; for he believed the doctor had only fallen asleep, and dropt from his chair. “ For me, doctor, I was sitting contemplating the beauty and perfections of the divine and delicious Miss Cherrylip ! And when I presume to lift a finger against you doctor, may my right hand forget its cunning ! But my Lord, and my God !” exclaimed he, lifting his eyes beyond the doctor, “ who is this we have got here ?”

The doctor, who had now got upon his knees, hearing this exclamation and question so fraught with surprise, looked around, and beheld in front of the book-case, the exact figure and form of his old intimate friend, the late laird of Welldean. He was clad in his old spotted flannel dressing gown, and a large towel tied round his head like a turban, which he always wore in the house when living. His face was a face of defiance, rage, and torment ; and as the doctor looked about, he lifted up his right hand in a threatening manner. As he lifted his hand, his night-gown waved aside, and the doctor and his friend both beheld his loins and his limbs sheathed in red hot burning steel, while a corslet of the same glowing metal enclosed his breast and heart.

It was more than enough for any human eye. The doctor

roared louder than a bull, or a lion at bay ; and, not taking time, or not able to rise on his legs, he galloped on all four toward the library door ; tore it open, and continued the same kangaroo motion, not down the stair, like the hapless bibliopole ; but, as providence kindly directed, along an intricate winding gallery that led around a great part of the house, all the while never letting one bellow await another. At the first howl that the doctor uttered, Jinglekirk sprung to his feet to attempt an escape, and would probably have been first out at the door, had he not stumbled on a limb of the table, and fallen flat on his face. Impelled, however, by terror of the tremendous and hellish figure behind, and led onward by the cries before, he made the best of his way that he was able after his routed friend.

The doctor at last came to the end of his journey, running against a double bolted door that impeded his progress. On this he beat with all his might, still continuing his cries of horror. While in this dark and perilous state, he was overtaken by his dismayed friend, the reverend John Jinglekirk, who, not knowing what he did, seized on the doctor behind with a spasmodic grasp. This changed the character of the doctor's cries materially. Before this accident, they were loud cries, and very long cries ; but now they became as short as the bark of a dog, and excessively hollow. They were like the last burstings of the heart, " Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh ;" for he thought the spirit had hold of him, and was squeezing him to its fiery bosom.

The domestics at length were aroused from their sleep, and arrived in the Bow Gallery, as it was called, in pairs and groups ; but still, at the approach of every one, the doctor renewed his cries, trying to redouble them. He was in a state of utter distraction. They carried him away to what they denominated the safe part of the house, and laid him in a bed, but four men could not hold him ; so that before day

they had put him in a strait jacket, and had old Gibby Falconer standing over him with a sapling, basting him to make him hold his peace. It was long ere the doctor was himself again, and when he did recover, it was apparent to every one that the fright had deprived him of all his philosophy relating to the physical properties of light, reflection, refraction, the prismatic spectrum, as well as transparency and opacity. These were terms never more mentioned by him, nor did he seem to recollect ought of their existence. It likewise cured him almost entirely of the clerical thirst after money. And all his life, the sight of a man in a flannel dressing-gown, with a white night-cap on his head, threw him into a cold sweat, and rendered him speechless for some time. Jinglekirk was not much the worse; for though he was apparently acute enough at the time, having been aroused by such a sudden surprise, yet, owing to the quantity of old hock he had swilled, he had but imperfect recollections of what had happened next day.

Randal came galloping home next day to learn the issue of the doctor's vigil; and though he could not help laughing till the tears ran down his cheeks, yet was he mightily chagrined and dismayed, not knowing what to do. After cursing the whole concern, and all the ministers of the gospel, and his uncle's restless soul, he galloped off again to the high and important concerns of rout and riot.

Swan had, ever since the death of her mother, lodged with an old maiden lady in the adjoining village. She generally visited her uncle every day, who had always manifested a great attachment to her. Yet, for all that, he had suffered her to run considerably in debt to the lady with whom she lived, for no earthly consideration could make Welldean part with money, as long as he could keep hold of it. Nevertheless, it having been known that his will was regularly made and signed, both Swan and Allan had as much credit as they

chose. They were two fond and affectionate lovers, but all their prospects were now blasted; and Randal, finding that they were likely to be dependant on him, had the profligacy and the insolence to make a most dishonourable and degrading proposal to his lovely and virtuous cousin.

How different was Allan's behaviour toward her! True love is ever respectful. His attentions were redoubled; and they condoled together their misfortune, and the dependant state in which they were now left. Allan proposed entering into the army, there being a great demand for officers and men at that period; and, as soon as he had obtained a commission, he said, he would then unite his fate with that of his dear Swan; and, by a life of economy, they would be enabled at least to live independently of others.

Swan felt all the generosity of her lover's scheme, but begged him not to think of marriage for a season. In the mean time, she said, she was resolved to engage in some nobleman or gentleman's family as a governess, for she was resolved, at all events, not to live dependant on his brother's generosity. Allan beseeched her not to think of such a thing, but she continued obstinate. She had never told Allan of his brother's base proposal to her, for fear of embroiling them together, and Randal, finding this to be the case, conceived that her secrecy boded approbation, and forthwith laid a scheme to get her into his power, and gain her to his purposes.

Allan had told his brother, in confidence, of his beloved cousin's simple plan, and besought him to protect her, and keep her in that independent station to which her rank and birth entitled her. Randal said she was such a perverse self-willed girl that Swan, that no one could prevail on her to do ought but what she chose, yet that he would endeavour to contrive something to benefit her.

After this, he ceased not to boast to his associates, that he

would soon show them such a flower in his keeping, as never before blossomed within the ports of Edinburgh. Accordingly, he engaged a lady of the town to go out in a coach, in a dashing style, and wait on Swan, and engage her for the family of an Irish Marquis. The terms were so liberal, that the poor girl's heart was elated. She was to go with this civil and polite dame for a few months, that she might be attended by some masters, to complete her education and accomplishments, all which was to be liberally defrayed by the nobleman. After that, she was to go into the family as an associate, with a salary of £300, an offer too tempting to be refused by one in Swan's situation.

Now, it so happened, that the very night on which the two clergymen watched for the ghost of old Welldean, was that on which this temptress came to Swan's lodging with her proud offer. Both Swan and the old lady with whom she lived were delighted—entertained the woman kindly; and it was agreed that she should tarry there all night, and Swan would depart for Edinburgh with her in the morning. Swan proposed sending for Allan, but to this, both the old dames objected as unnecessary, as well as indelicate. They were both in Randal's interest, and as it afterwards appeared, both knew him.

When Allan left the two ministers, he found his heart so ill at ease that he could not rest. The hand that he had seen upon the wall, haunted his imagination; and he felt as if something portentous were hanging over him. He went out to walk, for the evening was fine, and it was scarcely yet twilight, and naturally went toward the village which contained his heart's whole treasure, and when there, as naturally drew to the house where she resided.

When he went in he found them all in a bustle, preparing for his beloved Swan's departure. The two dames evaded any explanation; but Swan, with whom all deceit and equi-

vocation with Allan was out of the question, took him straightway into her apartment, and made him acquainted with the whole in a few words. He disapproved of every part of the experiment, particularly on account of their total separation. She tried to reason with him, but he remained sullen, absent, and inflexible. His mind was disarranged before this intelligence, which proved an addition it could not bear with any degree of patience. Swan had expected to delight him with the news of her good fortune, and perceiving the effect so different from what she had calculated on, in the bitterness of disappointment she burst into tears.

All his feelings of affection were awakened anew by this. He begged her pardon again and again, pressed her to his bosom, and kissing the tears from her cheek, promised to acquiesce in every thing on which her heart was so much set. "Only, my dear Swan," continued he, "do not enter on such a step with precipitation. Take a little time to inquire into the character of this woman with whom you are to be a lodger, and the connexion in which she stands with this noble family. What if the whole should be a trick to ruin a beautiful and unsuspecting young creature without fortune and friends?"

"How can you suspect such motives as these, Allan? Of that, however, there can be no danger, for I am utterly unknown to any rake of quality that would be guilty of such an action."

"At all events," said he, "take a little time. I am frightened lest something befall you. A preconception of something extraordinary impending over our fates, has for some time pressed itself upon me, and I am afraid lest every step we take may be leading to it. To a friendless girl, so little known, a situation so lucrative and desirable could not be expected to come of itself. Have you ever made inquiry by whose interest it was procured?"

No, Swan had never once thought of making such an inquiry, believing, perhaps, through perfect inexperience of the world, that her own personal merits had been the sole cause. The two lovers returned straight to the parlour to make this necessary inquiry. The wily procuratress, on several pretences, declined answering the question ; but Allan, pressing too close for further evasion, she acknowledged that it was all the transaction of the young laird, his brother. The old lady, the owner of the house, was loud in her praises of Randal. Allan likewise professed all his objections to be at an end, and lauded his brother for the kind part he had acted with regard to Swan. But as his eye turned towards the latter, he beheld the most perfect and beautiful statue of amazement that perhaps ever was looked on. Her arms were stretched down by her sides, obtruding only a small degree from perpendicular lines ; not hanging loosely, and gently, but fixed as wedges. Her hands were spread horizontally, her lips were asunder, and her eye fixed on vacancy. There was no motion in any muscle of her whole frame, which appeared to have risen up a foot taller than its ordinary size. The women were both speaking to her, but she neither heard nor saw them. Allan watched her in silent astonishment, till her reverie was over. She then gave vent to her suppressed breathing, and uttered, as from her bosom's inmost core, " Ah !—Is it so ! " and sitting down on the sofa beside Allan, she seemed to be trying in vain to collect her vagrant ideas. At length she rose hastily up, and retired to her own apartment.

The three now all joined loudly in the praises of laird Randal ; and long they conversed, and long they waited, but Swan did not return. Her friend at length went to her, but neither of them returned, until Allan, losing all patience, rung the bell, and desired the servant to tell them that he was going away. Mrs Mayder, the mistress of the house, then re-entered, and appeared flustered and out of humour. " Miss has taken

such a mood as I never witnessed in her before," said she ; " Pray, dear Allan, go to her, and bring her to reason."

Allan readily obeyed the hint, and found her sitting leaning her cheek on her hand ; and, at the very first, she told him that she had changed her mind, and was now determined not to go with that lady, nor to move a step farther in the business. He imputed this to pride, and a feeling averse to lie under any obligations to his brother, and tried to reason her out of it ; but it was all in vain ; she continued obstinate ; and Allan, for the first time in his life, suspected her of something exceedingly cross and perverse of disposition. Yet she chose rather to remain under these suspicions, than be the cause of a quarrel between the two brothers, which she knew would infallibly ensue if she disclosed the truth.

Her lover was about to leave her with evident marks of displeasure ; but this she could not brook. She changed the tone of her voice instantly, and said, in the most melting accents, " Are you going to leave me, Allan ? If you leave this house to-night, I shall go with you ; for there is no one on earth whom I can trust but yourself. I positively will not remain alone with these two women. The one I shall never speak to again, and with the other, who has so long been a kind friend, I shall part to-morrow." Allan stared in silence, doubting that his darling was somewhat deranged in her intellect ; and, though he saw the tears rolling in her eyes, he thought in his heart, that she was the most capricious of human beings, and cherished, at that moment, the illiberal suggestion that all women were the same.

" I am an unfortunate girl, Allan ;" continued she, " and if I fall under your displeasure, it will indeed crown my misfortune ; but I am not what I must appear in your eyes to be at this moment. After what passed a few minutes ago, however, I can no longer be the lodger of Mrs Mayder."

" You are out of humour, my dear Swan, and capricious.

I beg you will not make any hasty resolutions while in that humour. Your rejection of that elegant and genteel situation, merely because it was procured for you by my brother, is ~~beyond my comprehension~~; and, because this worthy woman, your sincere friend, urges you to accept of it, would you throw yourself from under her protection? No earthly motive can ever influence me to forsake you, or to act for a single moment in any other way than as your friend; but I am unwilling to encourage my dear girl in any thing like an unreasonable caprice."

"And will you leave me to-night, when I request and intreat you to stay?"

"Certainly not. At your request I shall sleep here to-night, if Mrs Mayder can supply me with a sleeping apartment. Come, then, and let us join the two ladies in the parlour."

"No. If you please you may go: and I think you should. But I cannot and will not face you lady again. I have taken a mortal prejudice to her. Allan, you are not to forsake me. Will you become security for what I owe to Mrs Mayder, and board me somewhere else to-morrow?"

Allan stood for some time silent, and looked with pity and concern at the lovely and whimsical creature before him. "Forsake you, Swan!" exclaimed he, "how can your bosom harbour such a doubt? But, pray, explain to me the cause of this so sudden and radical change in all your prospects and ideas?"

"Pardon me; I cannot at this time. At some future period, perhaps, I may; but I cannot, even with certainty, promise that."

"Then I fear that they are groundless or unjust, since you cannot trust me with them."

"I am hard beset, Allan. Pray trust to my own judgment for once. But do ~~not~~ leave this house to-night, for some-

thing has occurred which affrights me, and if you leave me here, I know not what may happen."

Allan turned pale, for the sight that he had seen himself recurred to his mind, and a chillness crept over his frame. He had a dread that something portentous impended over him and his beloved Swan.

"I fear I have as good reason to be affrighted," said he; "something unfortunate is certainly soon to overtake you and I; for it appears to me as if our very natures and sentiments had undergone a change."

"I have always anticipated good," returned she, "which is too likely to be fulfilled in evil at present. I do not, however, yield in the least to despair; for I have a very good book that says, 'Never give way to despondency when worldly calamities thicken around you, even though they may drive you to the last goal; for there is one who sees all things, and estimates all aright—who feels for all his creatures, and will not give up the virtuous heart for a prey. Though your sorrows may be multiplied at night, yet joy may arise in the morning.' In this is my hope, and I am light of heart, could I but retain your good opinion. Go and join the two ladies in the parlour, and be sure to rail at me with all the bitterness you are all master of. It will be but reasonable, and it will not affect poor Swan, whose measures are taken."

The trio were indeed right free of their censures on the young lady for her caprice; and Mrs Mayder, who, ever since Allan was left fortuneless, discouraged his addresses by every wile she could devise, hinted broadly enough how much she had often to do to preserve quiet, and to bear from that lady's temper. Allan assured them that it was in vain to think of prevailing on her to go with her kind benefactress at present, whom she declared she would not see again; and that both his friend Mrs Mayder, and himself, had fallen under her high displeasure for endeavouring to sway her resolution. But he

assured both, that he intended to use his full interest with his fair cousin, and had no doubt of ultimately bringing her to reason. He never once mentioned what she had said of leaving her ~~old friend~~, ~~drinking~~ that was only a whim of the moment, which calm reflection would soon allay.

He slept there all night, so that he was not at Welldean when the affray happened with the two parsons. He breakfasted with the two ladies next morning, and finally leading the elegant town dame to her carriage, he took leave of her with many expressions of kindness. Swan continued locked up in her own room until the carriage rolled away from the door. When they returned up stairs, she was come into the parlour, dressed in a plain walking-dress, and appeared quite composed and good-humoured, but somewhat absent in her manner. She fixed once or twice a speaking look on Allan, but unwilling to encourage her in what he judged an unreasonable caprice, he would understand nothing. At length he bade them good-morning, and said he would perhaps call in the evening. She did not open her lips, but, dropping him a slight courtesy, she went into her chamber, and followed him with her eye, as long as he remained in view. She then sat down, and gave vent to a flood of tears. "He even declines becoming my surety for a paltry sum of money!" said she to herself; "whatever it costs me, or whatever shall become of me, which God at this moment only knows, I shall never see him again."

Allan did not return in the evening. The events of the preceding night, and the horrific cries, looks, and madness of the doctor, had thrown the people of the hall into the utmost consternation, and occupied his whole mind. Between ten and eleven at night, he was sent for expressly by Mrs Mayder. Swan was missing, and had not been seen since the morning. Search had been made for her throughout the village, and in the neighbourhood, without effect. No one had seen her, save

one girl, who *thought she saw her* walking towards the bank of the river, but was not certain whether it was she or not.

The dismay of Allan cannot be described. He was struck speechless, and appeared for a time bereaved of all his wonted energy of mind; and grievously did he regret his cold and distant behaviour to her that morning. He found Mrs Mayder at one time railing at her for leaving her thus clandestinely, and threatening to have her seized and imprisoned for debt; and at other times weeping and lamenting for her as for her own child. Allan reminded her, never in his hearing to mention the sum owing to her on Swan's account, for that his brother, as their late uncle's heir and executor, was bound for it; and that he himself would voluntarily bind for it likewise, though he had it not in his power to settle it at that instant. Silenced on this score, she now gave herself up wholly to weeping, blaming Swan all the while for ingratitude, and denying positively that she had said one word to her that she could in reason take amiss. Allan knew not what course to take; but that very night, late as it was, he sent off an express to Edinburgh after his brother, informing him of the circumstance, and conjuring him to use every means for the recovery of their dear cousin; adding, that he himself would search the country all round on the ensuing day, but would trust to his dear Randal for Edinburgh, in case she had come that way. Randal rejoiced at the news of her elopement. He had no doubt that she would shape her course toward the metropolis, and as little that he would soon discover her, and have her to himself.

Allan remained at Mrs Mayder's house all that night likewise, having sent up orders for his servant and horses to attend him at an early hour. He slept, through choice, in the chamber which his dear Swan had so long occupied, and continued moaning all night like one at the point of death. Next morning he arose at the break of day; but as he was making ready to mount his horse, having stooped to buckle his spur,

as he raised himself up, he was seized with a giddiness, staggered, and fell down in a swoon. The village pharmacopolist was instantly brought, who declared the fit to be a *fabricula in the pericranium*, or pericranium, and that the gentleman was in a state of great danger as to phrenitis; and therefore, that severe perfrication was requisite, until suspended animation returned, and that then he would instantly phlebotomise him.

To this last operation, Allan's servant objected strongly, observing with great seriousness, that he did not see the necessity of *flaying* any part of his master, merely for a fainting fit, out of which he would soon recover; but if such an operation was necessary, why not rather take the skin of some other part than that he had mentioned, as his master was just about to ride?

Allan recovered from his swoon, but felt great exhaustion. He was again put to bed, blooded, and blistered in the neck; but for all these, before night he was in a raging fever, which affected his head, and appeared pregnant with the worst symptoms. In this deranged and dangerous state he lay for several weeks. Swan was lost, and could not be found either dead or alive. Randal was diligent in his researches, but failed not to console himself in the mean time with the company of such other fine ladies as the town afforded. The ghost of old Welldean kept one part of the house to itself. Mrs Tallowchandler, the fat house-keeper, continued to pray most fervently, but especially when she chanced to take a hearty dram. Nick the gardener did nothing, save preparing himself for another and a better state; and Gilbert the wood-cleaver was harder on the laird's strong beer than ever. Of all wasteful and ruinous stocks in this wasteful and ruinous world, a pack of idle domestics are the most—I'll not write another word on the subject.

This last-mentioned worthy, happening to say to some of his associates, that he would watch a night in the library by

himself, for a bottle of brandy, and speak to his old master too, if he presented himself; and this being told to Randal the next time he came out, he instantly ordered the beloved beverage to be provided to Gilbert, and promised moreover, to give him five guineas to drink at the village, when and how² he had a mind. There was no more about it, Gilbert took the bait, and actually effected both, if his own word could be believed. It is a great pity that there was nothing but the word of a man mortally drunk, to preserve on record the events of that memorable night. All that can now be done, is to give his relation next morning; for after he had got a sleep, and was recovered from his state of ebriety, the circumstances vanished altogether from his mind.

Randal remained in the house all the night, though not by himself, curious to be a witness of Gilbert's experiment; for every one in the house assured him, that he would be dislodged. Gilbert, however, stood his ground, never making his appearance; and after the rising of the sun, when the laird and a number of his attendants broke in upon him, they found the brandy drunk out, and honest Gilbert lying flat on the floor, sound asleep. With much ado they waked him, and asked if he had seen the ghost?

"The ghost! Oh yes—I remember now—I suppose so. Give me something to drink, will you? Eh! L—d, my throat's on fire! Oh-oh-hone!"

They gave him a jug of small beer, which he drained to the bottom.

"D—d wishy-washy stuff that!—Cooling though.—That brandy has been rather strong for me.—Heh-heh-heh, such a night!"

"Tell me seriously, Mr Falconer," said Randal, "what you saw, and what you heard?"

"What I saw, and what I heard.—That's very good! He-he-he! *Very* good indeed! Why, you see, master (*hick-*

ups) I—I saw the ghost—saw your un-(hick)nkle—state and form—never saw him better—(hick) quite jocular, I assure you.”

“~~Did he indeed~~ speak to you, Gilbert?”

“Speak! To be sure—the whole night.—What did he else?”

“By all means, then, if you can remember, tell us something that he said, if it were but one sentence.”

“Remember! Ay, distinctly. Every word. He-he-he-he! ‘Gilbert Falconer,’ says he; ‘Your glass is out.’ He-he-he-he! (and all this while Gilbert was speaking in a treble voice, and a tongue so altered with drunkenness, that it was difficult to understand what he said.) ‘Your glass is out,’ says he—It was true too—there it stood as empty as it is at this moment. ‘Gilbert (hick) Falconer,’ says he, ‘Your glass is out.’ ‘Thank you, sir,’—says I—‘Thank you for the hint, sir,’ says I—He-he-he! ‘Your glass is out,’ says he. ‘Thank you kindly, sir,’ says I, ‘for—the hint—You’re quite a gentleman—now,’ says I—He-he-he!—‘Quite a gentleman,’ says I—‘I have seen other days with you,’ He-he-he-he!—I said so—I did, upon my honour. For God’s sake give me something to drink, will you? Ay; that was the way of it—He-he-he-he!—‘Gilbert Falconer,’ says he; ‘Your’—(hick)—

“The old intoxicated ideot is mocking us,” said Randal; “There is nothing to be made of such stuff as that.”

“I never knew him tell a lie,” said Mrs Tallowchandler; “even at the drunkenest time I ever saw him. Would it please your honour to ask him, if that was the first sentence that the apparition spoke to him? If we can bring what passed to his mind by degrees, he will tell us the truth.”

Gilbert was still sitting on the floor, rhyming over his story of the glass, and in-fitting in fits of ideot laughter at it; when Randal again returned to him, and aroused his further

attention, by asking him if that was the very first sentence that the ghost spoke to him?

"The first sentence!—No.—Bless your honour, it was the last.—I took the hint and—filled that champagne glass—full to the brim—of brandy.—I thanked him first though—upon my honour, I did.—‘Thank you for the hint, sir,’ says I—and drank it off. ‘Here’s a good night’s rest to us both,’ says I.—‘I saw nae mair of him.’”

"Did he vanish away just then, Gilbert?"

"I daresay he did; (*hick*) at least, if he was there I did not see him.—If there had been fifty ghosts it would have been the same to old Gibby.—I think it’s time we had both a sleep, if your honour, or your honour’s likeness, or whatever you are, be speaking that way. So here’s a——”

"In what way do you mean, Gilbert? What was he then speaking about?"

"Did not I tell you?"

"Not that I remarked. Or if you did, it has escaped me."

"Tut! I told you every syllable to the end.—Give me something to drink, will you? And remember I have won my five guineas."

"Well, here they are for you. Only you must first tell me distinctly, all that passed from beginning to end."

"Odd’s my life, how often would you hear it? I have told you it word for word ten times.—‘Gilbert Falconer,’ says he,—‘I think you are an honest man.’ ‘Thank you, sir,’ says I.—‘You are come to the right way of thinking at last,’ says I.—‘There was no word of that when I lost my butlership,’ says I.—‘It agreed very well with my constitution—that.’ He-he-he! I saul so.—He grew very serious then—I knew not what to do.—‘I am now in the true world, and you still in the false one,’ said he—‘and I have reason to believe you honest at heart; therefore I have

a sacred and—important charge to give you—you must read through the Greek and Latin Classics.’—‘What?’ said I—‘Yes,’ said he, ‘you must go through the classics from beginning to end.’—‘I beg your pardon there,’—says I—‘Do this for me,’ said he, ‘else the sand of your existence is run.’—‘What?’ said I—‘Why, the thing is out of my power—if you are speaking that way, it is time we were both gone to sleep.’—‘Gilbert Falconer,’ says he, ‘Your glass is run out.’—‘Thank you for the hint, sir,’ says I—He-he-he!—That was the best of it all—I thought matters were growing too serious. ‘Thank you for the hint, sir,’ says I—I can replenish it—so I took a bumper to his better rest, that would have given three men up their feet.—I saw no more. He may be standing here yet for ought I know.”

“Gilbert, you are endeavouring to amuse us with the mere fumes of a distempered imagination. It is impossible, and altogether unnatural, that one should rise from the grave, and talk to you such flummery as this. Confess honestly, that there is not one word of it true.”

“True? By this right hand it is true every word. May I never see the light of heaven, if it is not the downright truth, as near as my memory retains it. A man can answer for no more.” As he said this, there was a glow of seriousness in his drumly looks, as well as of anger that his word should have been doubted.

“I will answer for it that it is true,” said Mrs Tallow-chandler.

“So will I,” said old Nicholas.

“But was it not a dream, Gilbert?” inquired Randal.

“No;” said Gilbert, with more steadiness than he had hitherto spoke, “I saw your late uncle with my bodily eyes, in the very likeness in which I have seen him in this apartment a thousand times—just as he wont to be, calm, severe, and stern.”

“ Were you nothing terrified ? ”

“ Why, I cannot say I was perfectly at my ease. As far as I recollect, I struggled hard to keep my courage up.—I did it.—This was the lad that effected it.—This black bottle.—Come let us go down to the hall, and have something to drink.”

These were glorious days for old Gilbert, as long as the five guineas lasted ! Every night was spent at a little inn in the village, where he and Andrew Car, game-keeper, more properly game-destroyer, to the laird of Lamington, had many a sappy night. Andrew was the prototype of his jolly master, though only like the shadow to the great original ; yet it was agreed by the smith and sutor Fergusson both, that Gilbert’s wit predominated, at least, as long as the five guineas lasted, the matter was not to be disputed, and that was not a very short time. At the inn where our old hearty cocks met, strong whisky was sold at three-half-pence a gill, and brandy at twopence. Of course sixpence each was as much as they could carry.

It is a pity that young men should ever drink ardent spirits. They have too much fire in them naturally. But it is a far greater pity that old men should ever want them. Drink reanimates their vital frame ; and, as they recount the deeds of their youth, brings back, as it were, a temporary but present enjoyment of these joyous days. It would have done any man’s heart good, to have seen the looks of full and perfect satisfaction that glowed in the faces of these notable old men, every time that Gilbert compounded the materials, grateful and inspiring, for a new feeking jug. How each sung his old hackneyed song, heard from night to night, and from year to year, but always commended—How they looked in each other’s faces—shook each other’s hands, and stroked one another’s bald crown. It is a pity such old men should ever want something to drink.

In all these nights of merriment and confidence, however, Gilbert would never converse a word about the apparition. Whenever the subject was mentioned, he grew grave, and pretended to have forgot every circumstance relating to the encounter; and when told what he had said, he only remarked, that he had not known what he was saying: and it is not certain but by this time he had reasoned himself into the belief that the whole was a dream.

After a long, dangerous, and wasting illness, Allan grew better. Gilbert had visited him every day before he went to his carousals, and the attendants were of opinion, that Allan's recovery was more owing to the directions he gave for his treatment, than all that the medical men did for him. During the height of the fever, in the wanderings of his imagination, he was constantly calling on the name of Swan Somerville, and he generally called every one by her name that came to his bed side. She was still nowhere to be found; even Randal, with all his assiduity, had not been able to trace her. But for nine days running, there were two young ladies came in a coach every day to Mrs Mayder's door, where Allan still lay, and the one went up stairs and saw him, while the other kept still in the coach.

As soon as his reason returned, his first inquiries were about Swan; and, as they were obliged to tell him the truth, it occasioned two or three relapses. At length, the guard of the mail coach flung down a letter. It was directed to Mrs Mayder; but her's was only a blank cover, enclosing one to Allan. His was without date, and simply as follows:

"I am glad of your recovery, and write this, to entreat you not to distress yourself on my account; for I am well, and situated to my heart's content. Make no inquiries after me; for, in the first place, it is impossible for you to find me out, and moreover, were you to do so, I would not see you. Look to our late uncle's affairs, only in as far as you are yourself

concerned. I have engaged another to see justice done to me. If I had not found more kindness and generosity among strangers, than from my relatives and those I trusted, hard indeed, would have been the fate of

SWAN SOMMERVILLE.

Allan read the letter over and over, cried over it like a child ; for his nerves were weak and irritable by reason of his late severe illness ; and always between hands, thanked Heaven for her health and safety. In the mean time, he planned fifty schemes to find her out, and as many to bring about a reconciliation. " I must have offended her grievously," said he to himself, " but it has cost me dear, and I was so far from doing it intentionally, that at that very time, I would cheerfully have laid down my life for her." He had only one thing to console him ; he thought he discerned more acrimony in her letter than was consistent with indifference. He now got better very fast ; for his mind was constantly employed on one object, which relieved it of the languor so injurious to one advancing toward a state of convalescence.

In the mean while, Gilbert's drinking money was wearing low, which he found would be an inconvenience for Andrew and him ; and the two made it up one night over their jug, that they would watch for the ghost together, for the same sum each that Gilbert had formerly realized. One difficulty occurred, who it was that was to give them this. The laird had not been at Welldean Hall for a long time ; and, as for Allan, his finances were so low that he could not spare them so much, though they had no doubt he would gladly have given triple the sum to have this mystery farther explored. At the first proposal of the subject, Andrew Car was averse to it ; but as their finances wore nearer and nearer to an end, he listened proportionally with more patience to Gilbert's speculations ; and always at their parting, when considerably

drunk, they agreed perfectly on the utility of the experiment. It is indeed believed, that Gilbert had anxious and fearful desires of a farther communication with this unearthly visitant, of whose identity and certainty of appearance he had no doubt. Nicholas had once seen it in the twilight, beckoning him from the garden towards the library; and he himself had again at midnight seen and conversed with it face to face; but from all that he could gather, the charges which it then gave him, appeared to have been so whimsical, he could make nothing of their meaning. That a spirit should come from the unseen world, to induce a man of his age to begin a course of studies in Greek and Latin, a study that he always abhorred, was a circumstance only to be laughed at, yet it was impossible he could divest himself of a consciousness of its reality.

On the other hand, he perceived that there was something radically wrong in the appropriation of his late master's effects. His will was lost, or had been fraudulently concealed; and those to whom he was sure the late laird intended leaving the best share of his immense fortune, were thus cut off from any, save a trivial part contained in moveables. It was no wonder that Gilbert, who was a well informed single hearted man, was desirous if possible to see those righted, whom he conceived to have been so grossly wronged, and whom he now saw in very hard circumstances; but, alas, he did not know the worst!

From the time that Allan received the letter from Swan, to that of his complete recovery, he had done nothing but formed schemes how to discover his fair cousin; and after discussing them thoroughly for nights and days together, he pitched on the right one. He knew there was a young lady in Edinburgh, the only daughter of a reverend professor, with whom Swan had been intimate at the boarding-school, and still kept up a correspondence. Though Allan had never

seen this young lady ; yet, as he knew Swan was shy of her acquaintance, and had so few in the metropolis that she knew any thing about, he conceived that she must either be living with Miss B——, or that the latter was well aware of her circumstances, and the place of her concealment.

He knew that if he applied personally or by letter, he would be repulsed ; and therefore went to Edinburgh, and took private lodgings, with a determination to watch that house day and night rather than not see who was in it, and to dog Miss B—— wherever she went, assured that she would visit Miss Somerville often, if they were not actually living together. His surmises were right. He soon discovered that Swan was living in this worthy professor's house, and not very privately neither. She walked abroad with Miss B—— every good day.

Allan, full of joy, flew to his brother's rooms, and communicated to him the intelligence of the happy discovery he had made, intending, at the same time, to settle with Randal how they were to act, in order to regain their cousin's confidence. He found Randal confined to his room, undergoing a course of severe medicines, he having made rather too free with his constitution. He professed great satisfaction at hearing the news, yet there appeared a confused reserve in his manner that Allan did not comprehend. But the former was soon relieved from his restraint, by a visit from two of his associates in dissipation. The conversation that then ensued, astounded Allan not a little, who had led a retired and virtuous life. He never before had weened that such profligate beings existed. They laughed at his brother's illness, and seemed to exult in it, telling him they had taken such and such mistresses off his hand until he got better, and therefore they hoped he would enjoy his couch for six months at least. Their language was all of a piece. Allan was disgusted, and left the house, and then Randal displayed to his honourable

associates how he stood with his charming cousin ; and how, if it were not for that whining sweet-milk boy, his brother, whom the foolish girl affected, he could be in possession of that incomparable rose in a few days. He told them where she was, within a few doors of him. One of the bucks had got a sight of her, and declared her the finest girl that ever bent a busk, and both of them swore she should not escape their fraternity, were she locked in the seraglio of the grand Seignior. Long was the consultation, and many proposals highly honourable were brought forward, but these it is needless to enumerate, as the one adopted will appear in the sequel.

Both Allan and Swan had received charges of horning on debts to a considerable amount, after their uncle's death. Allan applied to his brother, in whom he still placed the most implicit confidence, who promised that he would instantly cause a man of business pay them all up to a fraction. This he actually did ; but the man who transacted this for him, was a low specious attorney, quite at his employer's steps. He had plenty of Randal's money in his hand, but these bills were not particularly settled. This was a glorious discovery. Captions were served in the country, the one at Mrs Mayder's, the other at Weldean, as the places of residence of the two debtors, and none of them being there, the time expired. The attorney had got his cue ; the unsuspecting lovers were watched apart, and both of them seized and conveyed to jail, but each of them quite unconscious of what had happened to the other. Allan wrote instantly to his brother, expostulating with him on his negligence. He answered him civilly, but carelessly ; telling him, that he had neglected to settle with the scoundrelly attorney, having run himself short of cash, but that he would lose no time in getting the affair settled. However, as his health was so bad, he begged of Allan to have a little patience, and not to accept of relief from any

other person, else he would be both grieved and affronted. Allan lay still in prison, and waited, but waited in vain.

Swan was seized in the Canongate, at three o'clock, as she was returning with "Miss B——", from viewing the palace of Holyrood. The latter was so confounded, that she would have fainted on the street, had she not been supported by some ladies and gentlemen that were passing at the time. Swan suffered herself to be taken into custody, in dumb dismay, never opening her lips. One of Randal's worthy and genteel associates was near at hand, to abuse the messenger, the turnkey, and every one connected with the disgraceful affair; and, at the same time, offered to become bound for the whole debt, and take the lady off with him.

This being a business that required some consideration, his proposal was little attended to by the men in office, who regarded it as mere fustian; but poor Swan, in the forlorn and helpless state in which she found herself, could not help being struck with the young stranger's generosity, and thanked him in moving terms; but, at the same time, rejected his kind offer, and assured him she would soon be relieved. He swore he would rather see all Edinburgh burnt to ashes, ere he left such a lady in prison, and if she was determined not to accept of a temporary rescue from him, by G——, he would remain in prison with her, till he saw her relieved in some way more suited to her ideas of decorum. She reminded him, that such a proceeding would be the reverse of all decorum whatsoever, and however much she might value his company, there was a necessity that he should leave her to herself and her own resources. No, no; he would be d—d if he would. She should either go with him or he would remain with her, any of the alternatives she chose. It would be a disgrace to leave a lady in such circumstances, and he disclaimed the idea of it. D——n the rascals, they should not want money. Did they think that he could not pay them the paltry sum

of four or five hundred pounds, the confounded puppies? Rot their utensils, if he would think much to dust hell with them!

Swan smiled at the extravagance of the young man; but though it was a smile of pity, it made him still more outrageous. He cursed all lawyers and attorneys, as well as all people to whom ever debts were owing, sending them all to a place of retribution with one sweep. By the Lord Harry! if he were a messenger at arms, if any low-lived miserable whelp desired him to seize and immure *a lady* in such a place as that in which they sat, d—n him, he would scatter his brains for him. “And such a lady as they have lodged here to-night!” said he, wiping his eyes, “I beg your pardon, madam; but I can easily see that this is some vile plot; for you are born, bred, and educated to other fortune than this. For Heaven’s sake, let me disappoint the culprits, and convey you to a place of safety; I have given you my name. I am a gentleman, and a man of honour, I hope—Suffer me to write to some friends, and relieve you forthwith!”

Miss Sommerville positively declined his intervention for the present, and entreated that she might be left to her own thoughts, and her own resources; yet still she did it in that civil and affectionate way, that the puppy believed, or affected to believe, that she wished him rather to stay. “But are you sure the ragamuffin scoundrels will do you no harm?” said he, and without waiting for an answer, returned one himself. “D—n them, if I like their looks very well, though. No, no, madam; you must forgive me, but in truth I have not the heart to leave you here by yourself. Suffer me but to write to some friends; d—me, I’ll raise all Edinburgh, but I’ll have you set at liberty. I’ll bring Major Graham, and all the soldiers in the castle, to storm the old hovel, before I leave you here; L—d, how the artillery-men would smatter it down about the ears of the scoundrels!

Suffer me to write to my friends, or some of yours ; it is all one, provided I get you out here."

Swan continued obstinate ; telling him she would write to her own friends herself, 'if he would be so kind as give her leisure ; and as for his agency, she assured him again that she was not at liberty to accept of it. He continued however to wrangle with her on that score, to flatter her one while, and abuse her creditors another, until the arrival of Professor B——, who sent in his name, and asked admission, his daughter having alarmed him, and hurried him away to the prison, without so much as knowing what was the matter. The spark then bowed and made off, as somewhat alarmed, saying, he would call again. The reverend divine and he passed one another immediately within the door of the apartment. The buck bowed, and then cocked up his head again considerably to the leeward of the perpendicular line, while the professor stared him in the face, as striving to recollect him. Both passed on, and the cause of meeting with Miss Sommerville, the place, and the subject they had to converse on, quite banished from the professor's mind to ask who her gay visitor was. This parson came, honest man ! with the full intent of relieving Miss Sommerville ; but when he heard the amount of the debt, he blenched and turned pale. It was not a sum for a poor clergyman, who had a family of his own, to part with off-hand. Indeed, what man in the same vocation would have done it, for a young lady, almost a stranger, who had run herself into so much debt so early, and whom her natural guardians, it appeared, had not thought it prudent to relieve. He had, besides, heard so much of her sentiments relating to her cousin, the present laird, when he received her into his house, that he had small hopes of being reimbursed there, and that appeared to be the lady's principal dependence. In short, they could come to no conclusion whereby to obtain immediate relief. Miss Sommerville proposed that 'he

should borrow the sum on the security of her share of her uncle's effects ; but even there the hero of faith without works discovered that he would be involved, and fought shy : but concluded by observing, that " something behoved to be done immediately."

Before leaving the place, the professor had some conversation with the keeper, who informed him, that the young gentleman, the lady's friend, who was lately gone, had bespoken the best apartment that was unoccupied in that part of the jail appropriated to debtors ; and, in case she was detained, every accommodation befitting her rank. He then asked the keeper, who that gentleman was ? He named him, name, surname, and title : the divine shook his head, knowing him to be one of the most notorious profligates in the kingdom, and left the prison nothing improved in his estimation of Miss Sommerville, and almost resolved, whatever his daughter might say, to leave her to shift for herself.

When it was wearing late, Mr M'—, Randal's gallant friend, returned to the prison, sent in his name and compliments to Swan, and after some demur was admitted. What would not youth and innocence grasp at for deliverance, if shut up within the walls of a prison, and the darksome night approaching ? Alas ! the female heart clings too fondly to proffered kindness, especially in times of danger or distress ; without suspecting or endeavouring to weigh the selfish principles from which the apparent generosity springs, the guileless heart judges from its own motions. It had been agreed among the associates that M'— was never to mention Randal's name ; else, as the latter alleged, Swan's delicacy in that point would ruin all ; and as he was run quite short of ready cash, and in an infirm state of health, M'— was to pay the greater part of Miss Sommerville's debt, on condition that he had the honour of seducing her.

Well, into Swan's apartment he came, bringing £200

with him in notes, and offering his personal bond for the rest, payable in two months with interest. Swan made many objections, but actually wept with gratitude at the disinterested kindness of the gallant young man. The attorney was consulted ; but he had got his cue, and after many hems and haws, and repetitions of learned law terms, consented, so that the poor innocent Cygnet was now left fairly in the power of the fox. She had likewise given her consent, with an overflowing heart ; but at the last, when every thing was arranged for her departure, some slight demur arose about the place whereto she was to be taken. She insisted on being taken to the house of Professor B——, but this her benevolent guardian angel as violently protested against, declaring that the divine was unworthy of her confidence ; a cold hearted, calculating worldling, who had gone off with a few dubious expressions, and left her in the prison without asking any more after her, or coming back even to wish her a good night.

“ To what place do you then propose to take me in the mean time ? ” said Swan.

“ I propose to take you to a relation of my own,” said he, “ who keeps a boarding house for young ladies of quality, where you may either remain for a season, or for a few nights, or weeks, as you feel disposed.”

“ But will it not look awkward for an utter stranger to go to such a house ? How can I expect that the mistress will receive, among young ladies of quality, a girl just relieved from prison, and going to her house at this time of the evening, in company with a gentleman whom she never saw, till a disagreeable circumstance procured her the honour of his friendship this present day ? ”

“ Why, the truth is, that I know no woman on earth who is so particular about the character of her inmates as my worthy friend is. She must have the most absolute proofs of

their capabilities, tempers, and dispositions, and is strict in these matters almost to a proverb. But it so happens, that with her my word or will is a law. I have been a good friend to her house. My purse has been open to her by day and by night, and, in short, my fortune almost at her disposal. Into that house, therefore, you are certain of admittance. There you are perfectly safe, and from thence you can write to your friends, and arrange every thing in future as you shall choose."

"Well, you are so generous, and so candid, that I can never distrust your honour. I will send for Miss B—— to your friend's house, and consult with her there, and must trust myself to your protection for the night. What is the name of your friend, to whose house I am going?"

"Mrs M——, St James' Street."

"Very well."

* * * * *

What a dreadful confusion the ghost made at Welldean Hall that night! It was not as if one disturbed sinner had arisen from his grave only, but as if all his warlike progenitors for many ages had returned to that scene of bustle and array during their stern pilgrimage on this sphere. Scarcely had the rubied west lost its summer dyes, and twilight drawn her shadowy veil over the full blown bosom of nature, when the inmates of Welldean heard a noise as if half a score of men had been tearing down the shelves and books of the library, and dashing them on the floor. Nothing like it had ever been heard in the house before. All the domestics, high and low, (for there is no class of people among whom such a subordination of rank is preserved) crowded into the house-keeper's room, huddling one behind another, and testifying, by their looks, the mortal terror and astonishment that overwhelmed their hearts.

Little wonder was it! The noise continued to increase and

redouble. It grew, that it was not only as if the old folios had been dashed down in a rage on the floor, but as if the roof and rafters had been plucked down, and put into the hands of infernal giants to smash the building in pieces to its foundations. This turmoil was occasionally accompanied, when at the loudest, by a voice such as man never heard. It was not like any sound produced by art, nor was it precisely like thunder ; but they all agreed, that there was nothing in nature to which it bore so strong a resemblance as a flooded roaring cataract uttering human words. Gilbert was down in the village at his cups ; but, low as they rated him, in this dilemma he was sent for. The work of devastation above stairs continued and grew. The housekeeper begged of them all to join in prayer. This they were very willing to do, for they saw no other staff on which they could lean ; but then there was none to lead them. Mrs Tallowchandler said, though she was a poor, weak, and sinful woman, she would attempt it. Who knew but Heaven would have mercy on them ? They all kneeled, and the good woman began ; but her sentences were few and disjointed ; and she continued repeating and repeating the same thing, till those around her were beginning to lose hold of their gravity. At the first, when they began, and all were devoutly serious, every noise was hushed. The sudden stillness that ensued was in itself awful. Let erring and presumptuous man be assured of this, that the devotion of the heart never fails having influence in heaven, while all lukewarmness and indifference in sacred things is only a mockery of the Almighty, and ought but protection may be expected therefrom. At the beginning all was still ; and the fiends, of which the house seemed full, appeared to be hushed and quelled, by the simple words of prayer devoutly offered up ; but no sooner did the reverence due to that Being before whom they professed to be kneeling begin to subside, than the noise began again gradually to increase ; and as Mrs

Tallowchandler was continuing her imbecile repetitions, it came rushing nearer and nearer like a speaking whirlwind, till at length it burst open the door of the apartment where they were assembled, and stunned them with a deafening yell. It was a sort of half-howling half-whistling sound ; but nothing was seen. Mrs Tallowchandler joined it with a loud scream, and went into hysterics. No one regarded her. The female part of the family were all huddled into corners, and all uttering the same kind of shivering moaning sound. The men were sitting on their seats in a half-strapping posture, with their shoulders up, their hair standing on end, and their eyes bent fearfully on the door, “ May the Lord Almighty preserve us ! ” cried old Nicholas. “ Amen ! ” cried a hollow tremulous voice, at a distance. “ And some that are better than you all ! amen ! ”

None durst venture to go out in order to escape ; for the inhabitants of another world seemed now to be crowding the passages between them and the door : neither durst they throw themselves into the sunk area ; for there was a story below them ; though every one would gladly have been out, even though kingdoms had been their ransom. But when the women heard Nicholas, the gardener, pronounce the above sacred and serious words, with the mysterious response that was added, from a feeling that the wrath of the spirit was appeased by it, they called on Nicholas with one voice, “ Oh ! Nicholas, pray ! pray ! for God’s sake, pray ! ” Nicholas obeyed without delay ; and in the agony of his heart prayed with great fervour. But in the course of a few sentences, his prayer grew selfish, and he began to mention his own fears—his own personal safety and well-being. Such imperfections cling to man’s nature ! The rest could not join with him in his petitions, forgetting themselves ; and they felt sorry that the tenor of his words was of that nature that they could not. The derisions of the spirit was withheld by Heaven no longer than this principle of self

began to develope its cringing, cowardly, abominable features. A distant laugh of scorn was heard to begin as if in the library, with a hollow shaking tone like that uttered by the bittern at midnight; but it increased every moment till it made the house tremble, and drew nigher and nigher until the chairs on the floor began to totter. It seemed again approaching to the back of the door with tenfold violence. The heart of human being could not stand it. Some of the men that were next to the windows flung them open, and threw themselves into the area below. It was amazing with what celerity the rest followed, darting out at the windows head foremost, as swift as doves from their pigeon-holes, when scared in their habitation. In half a minute the whole family, consisting of nearly forty individuals, were weltering in three heaps on the gravel that bedded the sunk way, and every one escaped as best he could, and ran for the village.

What a figure they cut when they went there! Every one was covered with blood; for those who were not cut, and mangled in the fall, were all blooded over by the rest who were. They looked like so many demons themselves; and they found that the housekeeper and two of the maids were missing; on which they rationally concluded, that they having been the greatest sinners, the spirit had got power over them, and taken them with him. The villagers were petrified; appearing to be even more confounded, and at their wit's end, as the saying is, than the fugitives themselves.

While these things which have been narrated were going on at the hall, Gilbert and Andrew Car, late gamekeeper to the laird of Lamington, were enjoying themselves at the public house. They were both right far forward in their evening carousal, when the messenger from the hall arrived, to entreat Gilbert's attendance without a moment's delay. Gilbert was in no such confounded hurry; he helped himself to a glass, Andrew Car to another, and the boy to a third.

“Here’s for you, Master Rory, my good fellow; take this off to—to help your wind; and then tell us out your s—story at the utmost leisure. It is all buffoonery to be in such a haste. What signifies it to run puffing and—blowing through the world in that guise.—Here’s to you, boy.—Your good health I say, Master Rory. Sit down, sirrah, and take time, I tell you. Is it not the best way, Andrew Car?”

Now Andrew had one peculiarity of which I must apprise my readers, that they may understand him aright. He had a very rapid utterance. Many a man speaks quick, but there never was a man in the world spoke half so quick as Andrew Car. A certain printer in Edinburgh, was a mere joke to him; a title-page, or an errata to a volume, as it were; his utterance was ten times more rapid than Mr —. Therefore, in going over the part of this dialogue that belongs to Andrew, the reader must pronounce the words quicker by seventeen degrees than he ever heard a tongue utter them before. Andrew had likewise two keys that he spoke on, C sharp, and G natural, and his voice had no more but these, either intermediate or subordinate. He took the former on all occasions when his passions were ruffled, particularly when he disapproved highly of any thing, and the latter in his ordinary conversation. I shall therefore put down all the sentences adapted by him to the former key—italic characters, that every one may go on with him, and understand him thoroughly. I hate that my characters, which are all drawn from nature, should not be properly comprehended.

“Should not a man always do a thing leisurely, Andrew Car?—Is it not the best and most eligible way?”

“Ooo-yes-yes-yes-yes-yes—right-Gibby—right-Gibby—Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—right-right-right-right—luck-o’-

leisure-Gibby — luck-luck-luck-luck-luck-luck — billy-luck-luck.”

“ I say, Master Rory—my boy—do you—hear—that ? Is not that a beautiful specimen—of—Andrew Car’s theory and mine ? Eh ?—He-he-he—he—Eh ? Is it not, lad ? ”

“ Oh, Mr Gilbert, I have not time. Mrs Tallowchandler and a’ the fowk sent me to gar you come hame directly, an’ pray against the ghost. Oh, Gibby, the bogle has been very ill the night, an’ we a’ suspect it’s the deil.”

“ The deil, Mr Rory ! the deil ! Did you say it was the deil, lad ?—My faith—my man—if it be the deil—that’s another thing than a bogle, let me tell you.”

“ He’s layin’ about him at an awfu’ rate ; an’ gin ye dinna come an’ speak to him, an’ lair him, or pray him down, he’ll soon hac a’ the house about their lugs. When I came along the ither wauk, rinnin’ wi’ fright, I heard a kind o’ hooning sound, an’ I lookit ower my shoulder, an’——Mercy ! what d’ye think I saw ? I saw the deil i’ the shape o’ the auld bird, but as heegh as an ordinar tree, standin’ on the gavel wa’ wi’ a great burnin’ kipple in his hand ; an’ he had a’ the house daddit down the length o’ the third storey. O Gibby, haste an’ gang hame, and see if aught can be done.”

“ What can be done, boy ! why, nothing can be done to pacify him, but reading Latin and Greek.—Nothing but goin’ through the classics. We’ll go, however. Andrew, you are a scholar, and have the Greek.”

“ Ooo, no-no-no-no-no—Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—no-Greek, billy—no-Greek—no-Greek—no-Greek—no-no-no-no-no.”

“ Well, but we shall go, howsoever. You know we have now agreed to go together and speak to it. I am in a proper key to go any where—we’ll go—it is as well soon as late, when the family is in extremity—we’ll be well rewarded—come, let us go.”

“ Oooo-no-no-no-no-no — Gibby-Gibby-Gibby — no’ the-

night—not-the-night—not-the-night—some-other—some-other—some-other—other-other-other—madness-billy—madness-madness-madness—folly-folly-folly-folly-folly—’nother-gill—’nother-gill—’nother-gill—gill-gill-gill-gill.”

“ Boy—give my compliments—to Mrs Tallow—chaundler, and tell her, that my—friend, Mr Car, dares not come to-night, because the ghost is irritated—and it is dangerous to meddle with him ; but——”

“ True-Gibby—true-true-true-true—right-billy—right-billy—right-right-right-right—kittle-business—kittle-business—kittle-kittle-kittle—’nother-gill—’nother-gill—’nother-gill—lass-lass-lass-lass-lass—gill-gill-gill-gill-gill.”

“ But as I was saying—if it is the deil he must have a sacrifice before he lay. They must give him one of their number, which may well be spared.”

“ Sacrifice ? sacrifice—what-Gibby—what-Gibby—what-what-what—sacrifice—sacrifice—fie-fie-fie—no-no-no-no-no.”

“ It is a literal fact, sir—and well known to all exorcists. They must do it by lot, tell them, boy. Even if Satan should appear when we two watch together, we must cast lots which of us is to be his to appease him. Or, for instance, if I am the speaker, I have the power and right to consign you over to him.”

“ Oooo-no-no-no-no-no—Gibby-Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—no-no-no—no-right—no-right—no-right-billy—no-no-no-no-no—living-soul—living-soul—not-yours—not-yours-billy—not-yours—no-no-no-no—soul-soul-soul—soul-billy—not-do—not-do—not-do—no-no-no-no.”

“ I will reason this matter with you, my worthy friend ; suppose you and I make a contract together—to go and watch an incensed spirit, which, to a certainty, makes its appearance—we take our chance together, you know—why, is it not better that one of us should make a sacrifice of the other, than that

it should take us both? or, for instance, if you take it on you to address him——”

“ No-no-billy—not-address—not-address—not-speak—not-speak—no-no-no-no-no. ‘ Too-quick—too-quick—too-quick—quick-wick-wick-wick-wick. ‘ Stonish-him—stonish-him—stenish-him. All-wrang-Gibby—all-wrang—all-wrang—all-wrang-wrang-wrang-wrang. Precious-soul-billy—precious-soul—precious-soul—precious-soul-soul-soul—Gibby-lad—Gibby-lad—Gibby-lad. Have-you-there—have-you-there—have-you-there—ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! Soul-soul-soul-Gibby-lad—Gibby-lad—ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!”

This sort of argument used by Andrew Car is the worst to answer of all others, because the rest of the company severally join in it, and then the argument is at an end. At this time it was used by Andrew in such a way that it had precisely that effect. Gilbert joined in the laugh, and the gamekeeper chuckled and crowed over his victory.

Another smoking jug having by this time been made, the dilemma of the family at the hall was soon totally forgotten; even the lad Roderick said little more about it, having no wish to return; and there they sat till they were found out and joined by their bloody and half-deranged companions. And then, drunk as ^{the} two veterans were, the strangeness of the tale made ^{it} ^{so} ^{serious} for a little, though always disposed, ^{in a short time}, to forget the subject. Nothing could cheer the hearts of the fugitives in the smallest degree. The horrid scene that they had escaped from, and the loss of their three companions, held their minds chained up in utter dismay. They marvelled what the ghost would do with the three women. Some said, he would tear them limb from limb; some that he would take them to a high rock, and throw them headlong down; and some said that he would take them away to hell with him, soul and body; but none thought of attempting a rescue.

"It chanced, however, to come into Gilbert's recollection, that he lay under many obligations to the fat housekeeper, for many a scold, and many a glass of strong beer and queich of brandy beside; and he gallantly proposed to go, for one, to the hall, and see if any remains of the women were left. No one would join him, a circumstance that always had the effect of exalting Gilbert's courage, and he persisted in his resolution, advancing many half-intelligible arguments in favour of the measure, which none of them regarded, till he turned his eyes on Andrew, and remarked, that he surely would not desert him, as he was always noted for befriending the fair sex.

"Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha, Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—some-ways-billy—some-ways—some-ways—some-ways-good-at-a-pinch—good-at-a-pinch—good-at-a-pinch,—Gibby-lad—hah-hah-hah-hah!"

"Then you surely will accompany me, Mr Car?—Eh?—hern't you?—you are bound in honour, sir.—Eh?"

"Don't-know-Gibby—don't-know—don't-know-know-know-know. No-joke-this—no-joke—no-joke—no-joke-at-all billy-billy-billy. Long-spoon-sup-wi'-the-deil—long-spoon-sir—long-spoon—long-spoon. Not-safe—not-safe—not-safe—no-no-no-no-no-no."

"Why, Mr Andrew—let-me-tell-you, sir—are you a man of honour—and courage, sir, as I always took you for—eh?"

"Ooo-yes-yes-yes-yes—hope-so—hope-so—hope-so-Gibby—hope-so."

"Then what the devil are you afraid of, sir? Eh? I would defy the devil, the world, and the flesh, and despise them."

"Oooo-no-no-no-no-Gibby-Gibby—no-no-no-no—not-the-world-and-the-flesh—not-the-world-and-the-flesh—no-no-no-no. Nought-behind-at-all-Gibby—nought-behind-at-all—no-no-no-no. Not-do-sir—not-do-billy—not-do—not-do—not-do."

Have-you-there—have-you-there—have-you-there—ha-ha-ha-ha-ha.”

“Mr Car, I know you to be a man of spirit. Eh?—I will lead the way—Will you go, or will you not? Eh?”

This was a home thrust; there was no evading it. Andrew was obliged to acquiesce, make a virtue of necessity, and value himself on his courage. Accordingly, Gilbert taking a brilliant lanthorn in his left hand, a stout staff in his right, and Andrew Car at his shoulder, staggered away to Welldean Hall as well as he could, well convinced, that though his companion had less drink in his head, he had likewise less courage at his heart, and therefore Gilbert was determined to *show off* that night, and in nowise to manifest fear for any created being. Andrew, though not quite so confident, had yet a certain character of manhood to support, which he judged it quite incumbent on him to retain; he could never otherwise have shewn his face in social circle more. Up the street they went, not keeping exactly the same line of longitude. Gilbert sometimes took a swing, first the one way, and then the other, like a ship beating up against the breeze.

“Come-come-come-Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—straight-straight-straight-straight. Laugh-at-us-sir—laugh-at-us—laugh-laugh-laugh-laugh—steady-steady-steady-steady-steady.”

“Steady—~~you~~—you—say—Mr Car?—We’ll see—by—and—by—who—is most steady. Come on, my brave fellow.”

Forward they went as they best could. The way was well-known to Gilbert. His feet knew it by instinct, for many a hundred nights had they traced it, when their eyes were as completely closed as if they had been tied up with a napkin. The distance from the village to the hall was scarcely a mile and a half through the fields. When they were about half-way, Andrew, whose hearing was more acute than his associate’s, began to mumble and speak with more than ordinary velocity, and drew Gilbert always to one side. The latter re-

fused to go in any other direction than that in which he was proceeding, and a few paces onward the cause of Andrew's agitation became apparent. The most dismal groans were heard at about fifty yards distance in the field. As soon as they fell on Gilbert's ears he heaved his lanthorn, and turned off towards the place from whence the sounds proceeded. Andrew instantly took his high key on C sharp, and poured forth such a torrent of speech that no man could take up a distinct sentence of it. They were all terms of decided disapprobation of Gilbert's adventure; but the only sounds that fell on his ear, that he could call language, were some such words as these.

"Tell-ye-Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—tell-ye-tell-ye-tell-ye-tell-ye. Noo-no-no-no-no-no. Make-nor-meddle-make-nor-meddle-make-nor-meddle—no-no-no-no. Dogs-lye-dogs-lye-dogs-lye—tell-ye-tell-ye-tell-ye-tell-ye-Gibby-Gibby-Gibby, &c."

Gilbert, without regarding this water-spout of human breath, proceeded straight onward to the object of his concern. Andrew was sometimes shouldering away, and sometimes drawing after the light, while the words by degrees died away from his tongue; but the same sound still continued, and became very like the sounds uttered by the bird, called in this country the Heather Bleater, when he wings the air in the gloaming. Gilbert, to his sincere grief found his old friend and associate, Mrs Tallowchandler, lying stretched on the ground, unable to rise, moaning grievously. She told him, after blessing him for his kind concern, that her leg was broken; on which he called stoutly to Andrew for assistance. Andrew approached, speaking all the way. "Told-ye-told-ye-told-ye," he was saying as he came, half running; and, once he saw who it was, and how grievously she was hurt, it is impossible to describe his manner, and the confusion of ideas that intruded themselves on his imagination; but always between, he seemed to blame Gilbert for coming to her, as if

that had been the cause of her misfortune. "Told-ye—told-ye—told-ye—told-ye. Would-not-be-told—would-not-be-told—no-no-no-no. Broken-broken-broken-broken? Ooo-no-no-no-no-no-impossible-impossible-impossible-possible-possible. Broken-broken-broken? What-what-what-what-what? Ooo-no-no-no-no-no-no." And so on he went.

Gilbert, in the height of his zeal and friendship, proposed, that Andrew and he should carry the hurt woman to the village; and, setting down his lanthorn, the two essayed the task, unfit even for a Hercules to perform. Andrew lifted her shoulders, and Gilbert her feet; and, having with difficulty heaved her about two inches from the ground, they began to move toward the village, Andrew in a retrograde direction, and Gilbert pushing forward behind. Scarcely had they gained five feet in their progress toward the doctor, when the weight and pressure upon Andrew caused his heels to dip in the soil, and laid him fairly on his back; while Gilbert fell with his full weight above his fair injured friend, who screamed and groaned most piteously. The former of these sounds serving as a pitch-pipe to Andrew, who took his high sharp key—

"Told-ye-told-ye-told-ye-told-ye—body's-mad-body's-mad-body's-mad—hout-hout-hout-out-out-out. Never-do-never-do-never-do-never-do—no-no-no-no-no-no."

"What, did you mean to tumble down there, sir? The man has not the strength of a weazel! But he is drunk," said Gilbert. "Weazel-weazel-weazel-weazel? What-what-what-what-what-d'ye-say-d'ye-say-d'ye-say? Body's-mad-body's-mad-body's-mad—H'm-h'm-h'm-h'm—weazel-weazel-weazel?"

Mrs Tallowchandler put an end to this growing heat and controversy between our two heros, by begging, that in pity they would return to the village, and bring or send a cart. Andrew took the lanthorn and ran back to the village; but Gilbert staid to condole with his old friend, and lend her any

kind office he was able until Andrew's return with the cart ; and a frightful detail she there gave him of the incidents that had occurred at the hall in the evening, and confirmed the boy's strange asseveration, that the ghost had nearly levelled the building.

A horse and cart soon came, with the doctor and apothecary in attendance, and in it they laid the housekeeper, whose limb the doctor found not to be broken, but sprained, and much swelled. The expedition of our two heroes to the hall was thus broken off, Andrew not having judged it proper to return, and Gilbert totally forgetting it, in the misfortune of his friend, with whom he staid during the remainder of the night, comforting and encouraging her. Indeed, as soon as he found that her leg was not broken, she grew as communicative and whimsically superstitious as ever. Sore she regretted that Gilbert was not there to have spoke to the old laird, when he came in among them, "roaring like a elephant," as she expressed it ; and Gilbert rather wished that he had, since matters had come to such a pass, assuring her, in the meantime, that he and his friend Andrew had agreed to sit up in the library a night together, some time or other, to see if they could learn what it was that the old laird had to communicate ; and now, since his master's servants were all driven from the house, if she (Mrs Tallow-chandler) would countenance the matter, he thought the sooner the better, and he had no objections that it should be the following night. She commended his undaunted and manly spirit ; promised that she would see them well rewarded ; and moreover, that they should have the keys of the cellar and larder, and want for no entertainment that the hall could afford ; and thus, before morning, the matter was finally settled between them.

As soon as the sun arose all the servants hurried up to the mansion-house to witness the devastations of the last night, expecting that there would scarcely be one stone left stand-

ing on another. By the way, they discovered that the two young females that were amissing the evening before had both joined the party ; but both kept a mysterious silence whither they had been. In the beginning of next year, however, it began to be suspected, that the one had lodged with a journeyman tailor, and the other with the apothecary's apprentice, in their several apartments in the village. Such a dispensation as that they had met with was an excuse for people doing any thing !

At the hall every thing was in its usual style. There was not an item injured or misplaced from the bottom to the top of the house ; not a book in the library was altered, nor any one thing that they could discern ; all was standing in state and form as they left it, with the doors bolted and the windows barred, all save those out at which they had effected their escape. This was the most wonderful thing of all ! People could no more trust their own senses !

It is a difficult matter to tell a story as it should be told ; for, after the party separates, it is necessary to fly always from one to another, to bring them forward to the same notch of time. In conformity with this laudable measure, the writer of this notable tale must return to his fair fugitive, whom he left in circumstances more perilous than any of his readers can well suppose, or than any of her connexions, save her uncle's spirit, seemed to be aware of. If they were, they took no concern about the matter. Had Allan known of her danger, how his heart would have been wrung ! but he concealed his name and disgrace from every one save his brother, who was in no hurry to relieve him, until the gallant triumvirate had accomplished their purposes with Swan, which the greater part of my readers will remember was wearing but too near to a consummation. These are, I know, quite impatient to get into a detail of all the circumstances ; but there are some incidents that it is painful for an author to enu-

merate, and it is only in adherence to truth that he submits to the ungracious task. Without them, the tale cannot go on, so they must needs be told. The circumstances in the present case were then precisely as follows

“ Well, I must trust to your protection for this night,” said Swan. “ What is the name of the lady, your friend, to whose house I am going?”

“ Mrs M'—— of St James' Street,” said he.

“ Very well.” She took her Indian shawl about her shoulders, and after turning six or seven times round in the apartment, as if looking for something else, she took hold of Mr M'——'s proffered arm, and he led her out. “ God bless you!” said she. “ Amen, with all my heart,” said he, “ and the lovely wisher to boot.” “ And God will bless you,” added she, “ for this unmerited kindness to a poor friendless orphan.”

“ O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as others see us!”

says Burns; but I have often thought this prayer should be reversed; for if we knew the motives and intentions of others, as well as we do our own, how often would we eschew the errors into which we fall! and if Miss Summerville had known her conductor's intentions at that time, as well as he himself knew them, how far would she have been from blessing him? Yet, poor fellow! he rejoiced in it, and nothing in the world could have made him so happy as taking that lovely and innocent young lady home with him that night, and ruining her. It is a pity there should be gentlemen of such dispositions, but nobody can help it.

“ Mrs M'—— in St James' Street! Mrs M'—— in St James' Street!” In the hurry of departure, Swan could not think or suspect who Mrs M'—— of James' Street was, but

repeating it to herself all the way down the stair, just as she came to the door of the coach, it came to her recollection that she had met with that lady before, and not a very great while ago.

“ I beg your pardon, sir,” said she. “ I have forgot something in the apartment that I left ; excuse me for a little.” “ Please step into the coach, madam, I will go up and bring it.” “ No, you cannot bring it, I must go myself.” With that she wrung her arm out of his, and ran up the stairs. When she came to the place she had left, the man was just in the act of locking it up. But when he saw her come thus hastily to the door, he opened it instinctively, and she entered. Instead of looking for ought she had left, she seated herself in the chair, and desired the turnkey to lock her up till to-morrow, and at his peril to let any one enter the door of that apartment till then. The honest man began to expostulate, telling her that the matter was settled, and that neither he nor his captain had any more charge of her ; but seeing her so peremptory, he obeyed, and went to consult a higher power, thinking that the lady was a little deranged in her mind.

M^c—— did not wait long below in the court of the prison, but impatient at the young lady’s stay, went likewise up to her apartments, where he was refused admission. At first he began to abuse the turnkey, thinking he had locked her up through mistake ; but finding that it was by her own desire, he began to suspect that she had discovered something he wished to conceal, and dared not push the matter much farther at that time. Finding out the under turnkey’s ideas of the state of her mental faculties, he said it was but too true, and however disagreeable it might be, there would be a necessity of carrying her away home by force. This he urged strongly as a last resource, and was joined by all the underlings about the prison ; but the captain, or principal keeper, would not

permit it, for fear of raising an alarm, and making a disturbance at that time of the evening. He undertook however to keep the lady in safe custody until next day, lest any evil might befall her. M'——, by dint of entreaty, got a conversation with her over a half door before he went away, and there was no manner of blandishment, or passionate regret, that he did not use ; insomuch that Miss Sommerville was again melted into an affectionate generosity, which she could not repress, yet continued firm in her resolution. He was obliged to go home with a grieved heart, and relate to his associates this first failure of his grand enterprize ; on which the rest of the night, or rather morning, was spent by them in devising new schemes more adapted to the characters of those with whom they had to do, and in relating other adventures of the like nature. Every man and woman in the world is engaged in the pursuit of happiness, and though we wonder at one another, yet all continue to pursue it in their own way. Nice young profligate puppies of gentlemen in general believe, that they enjoy life in a most exquisite way. We'll not quarrel with them about that, but we'll force them to admit what all the world sees, that they are of short duration, and generally followed by bitter fruits.

Swan spent a sleepless night, but scarcely was her thoughts ever otherwise employed than on Mr M'——. His kindness and generosity interested her ; and if it had not been for the naming of one lady, of whose character she had weighty suspicions, she thought she could have trusted him, and gone with him to any part of the kingdom. So difficult is it for suspicion to find entrance to a guileless heart.

Next morning she sent, for the principal keeper, a man well known for probity and honour, and to him she communicated her case, all save two circumstances. The one was the private behaviour of her cousin Randal to her, and the other was the name of the lady to whose house M'—— pro-

posed to have taken her over night. The latter subject was several times at the root of her tongue, but timidity withheld it from being uttered. She had a certain feeling of kindness, or generosity, hankering about her heart for the young gentleman, and she could not bear, with one dash, to run the risk of blotting it out for ever. She therefore asked the keeper only about his name and connexions, and what circle of society he kept? The keeper had heard the name and title of the gentleman, but knew nothing about him farther. He promised, however, in a short time to satisfy her in all these points. "I have a Highland officer about the prison," said he, "principally for the purpose of carrying and bringing messages; I am sure he will either know the gentleman himself, or find those in a few minutes that will give you a list of all his pedigree for forty generations."

The keeper was glad thus to amuse the lady, and reconcile her to what appeared to him to be an inconsistency in her prosecutor. He had during the morning got one letter, and one charge after another, about his prisoner, until he knew not well how to proceed; yet, for his own security, he resolved to detain her. The bucks, terrified that she should get away from under their thumbs, as they termed it, had put the attorney upon different manœuvres to detain her in prison until she was obliged to accept of their relief on their own conditions. They knew too well, that having secured Allan, they had little to fear for the interference of any other. The keeper likewise entered into her scruples, or pretended to do so, of getting so deeply obligated to an utter stranger. "It is not, madam," said he, "what you or I may feel, and know to be the truth, but how the world may view it. A young lady's character is her all, or next to that; and better had you remain a year in this place than owe your liberty to some gentlemen, even though their motives may be unimpeachable. Though it is a truism that things must be as they are, yet

their effects are too often modelled by the judgment of the world. I will send for Malcolm, and have this matter cleared up."

Malcolm was sent for, and soon arrived with his bonnet in his hand.

"Malcolm, do you know any thing of the gentleman that came in a coach last night, and waited on this lady?"

"Does the lady not know any thing of him her own self?" said Malcolm, with true Highland caution.

"That is no answer to the question I put to you," said the keeper, sternly.

"Hu, not at hall, your honour—but hersel was peen thinking—that if laidy would pe tahaking in shentlemans——."

"Hold your peace, you Highland rascal! You have no right to form any conjecture of aught that passes here by my authority. I ask you, if you know aught of Mr M'——, who was here last night, or of his connexions, and I desire you to answer me without farther circumlocution?"

"O't t——n him!" said Malcolm, "has he peen pehavig pad to te dhear lhady?"

Miss Sommerville, never having conversed with a native Highlander, at least with one of Malcolm's rank, before, was so much amused by his shrewd and obstinate caution, as well as his uncouth dialect, that she burst out a laughing at this last question. The keeper also smiled, which, encouraging Malcolm in his petulance, he went on.

"Hu! hope she would only pe some frheedom, lhove? Highland shentlemans pe fery pad for frheedom, lhove—if te lhaidy pe peautifulmost, she pe very pad indheed."

The keeper, finding that nothing would be gotten out of Malcolm, if there was any risk of a Highlander's character being impeached, took a wiser course, and assured him, that so far from behaving ill to the lady, he had acted so nobly, that she was anxious to know a little more of him, to make him

some amends, or acknowledgment, at least. Malcolm's eyes gleamed with joy and pride.

"Hu! she might pe shoor of tat! All tat you hafe to do with Highland shentlemaⁿs is, to cotinfid^{en}ce him. Hersel pe fery sorry tat she not kif cood inform^hation, she know so less of him. But there pe one Maister Ronald Macmurrich, a shairman of the Rhegister, who is his full cousin py te creat erhandnihoth^{er}'s side; she pe tell you all and mhor^e. Had she peen of Clan-Darmachie, or Clan-Stubart, (all out of Appin) or te long Clan-Khattanich, she could hafe come through all teir plood."

Here Malcolm was stopped short in his muster-roll, and sent in search of Ronald Macmurrich. In the meantime, the keeper remained conversing with Swan, and advised her strongly to apply to her cousin Randal, who, he said, was her natural guardian, and obliged both in honour and law to pay every farthing that was contracted during the lifetime of her uncle, as it was on his credit that the debt was taken on; and there being a part of her cousin's behaviour which she did not choose to divulge, the keeper wondered at her pride and shyness, and supposed that she had drawn too freely on her cousin's bounty previous to that time.

"This is Mhaster Ronald Macmurrich, sir," said Malcolm, entering briskly, with his bonnet in his hand, and bowing with a grace becoming a man of higher rank, "and though I would peen saying it, she pe shentilman that you might pe thependance on hims words."

"Come away, Mr Ronald, I want to converse with you in this lady's presence for a minute or two. Malcolm, you need not wait. Ronald, do you know any thing of Mr M'— of G—h?—Malcolm, I tell you, you need not wait."

"Hu, it mak fery liddle dufference to her-nain-sel to whait a few mhinutes to pe oblhiging your honour."

“ No, no,—off, off. What the devil are you standing there for, sirrah ?”

“ I can stand any where that your honour pleases. I can pe sthanding here then.”

“ Go out at the door, I tell you, and close it.”

“ Hu, but your honour will soon pe wanting hur ackain ; and mhere the less Maister Ronald has been got a fery pad mhenbry, and he'll pe lhosing to forget of mmany things.”

“ Hu, shay, shay, she pe fery creat of truth all tat Maister Mhawcom has been to say.”

The captain finding that the two cronies were determined to keep together, thought it best to humour them ; for he knew if any of them grew obstinate, he might as well contend with a mule.

“ So you know the laird of G——h, Ronald ?”

“ Hu, what then ? Pless your honour, she pe full coosin to himself. Mach-Vich-Alaster More Machouston Macmurrich was her erhandmother's ffather ; and he was khotten upon a child of Kinloch-Mhulart's.”

“ And, py my faith, that's all very true that Maister Rhonald says ; and she could pe taking her sworn oath to every whord of it.”

“ What sort of a gentleman is he ?”

Hu ! the finest shentilman that's in the whole world. And upon my soul, you would not pe finding such a shentilman if you were to rhide fhifty thousand mhiles.”

“ Ay, she be all truth and mhere that Maister Rhonald says.”

“ What sort of moral character does he hold ?”

“ More-ill ? Hu, tamn it, no. He has not cot one single spark of that in his whole pody and souhl.”

“ No, you may swore that, Maister Macmurrich.”

“ What ? Not one spark of morhality ?”

“ Morhality?—Ay.—Devil a single scrap of her, I’ll pe sworn.—Morality?—What she pe?”

Here the captain and Miss Sommerville could not contain their gravity, which staggered Ronald a little, and made him ask the last question.

“ That is, perhaps, too general a term to be fully understood,” said the keeper; “ we shall enter into particulars; and as it is all in good friendship, you may answer me freely. In the first place, then, can you tell me how he has behaved himself in general with regard to women?”

“ Oo, ter never was a shentilman pehaved so petter since ta world was made. You know, if ta lhaidy was peing fhery pohunny, and fhery hamiabie, and fhery khind, why you know I could not pe answering for myself and far less for him; but I’ll take it upon me to pe sworn, that he would not force a child against her own will.”

“ So you may, so you may, Maister Rhonald.”

“ What sort of company does he keep? Can you tell me the names of any of the ladies or gentlemen whose houses he visits at?”

“ Hu, he goes to the roots of all the lhadies, and all the lhords of ta whoule kingdom; and to ta hadfu cats, and to te grhand mhinisters tat prheach. There is not a shentilman in ta whoule world that is so well taken hould of. I can pe sworn of tat too.”

“ Indheed so you can, Maister Rhonald, and so can I too.”

“ He might have peen kitting one hearl’s dhaughter last year; and I do know tat tere was mhany traps laid to hould him into her; but there were so very mhany fine lhadies after him, that he would not pe taken.”

“ Yes, Maister Rhonald, that is vbery troo. And he would have kotten fifty thousand pounds with her, and more; and there was none deserved it so well.”

“Hu ay, you may pe saying tat ; for it is a kood man, and so khind to the poor at home.”

“Is he indeed noted for kindness to the poor ?” said Swan, with some degree of warmth.

“Indheed it is, mattam. She pe so much cootness and khindness, that he’ll pe koing through his poor fharmer’s once a year, and when any of them has been kot a fhery pretty daughter, he takes them off their hands altogether, and pring them to this town to make lhadies of them. And it is fhery khind, for then they would pe trudging at home, and not working like bhaists.”

This was rather an equivocal recommendation ; but Miss Sommerville, noting that it was given in seriousness, put the best interpretation on it that it could bear ; and before they could proceed any farther with their inquiries, Mr M—— arrived, and, sending in his name, was admitted. In this most perilous situation we must again leave poor Swan, like a lamb strayed from the flock, whom three wolves is watching to devour, in order to bring forward our tale. Al-lan was in the same jail with her, astonished and grieved at the remissness of his brother, in relieving him, and concerned about his dear cousin, whom he now found by experience to be dearer to him than life. At this period their circumstances were totally unknown to one another.

After Gilbert had taken a sound sleep, he arose about mid day, and went in search of his friend, Andrew, to whom he imparted his plan, and the agreement he had entered into with the housekeeper, in the absence of all higher concerns of the house ; and it being no frightful thing to speak of a ghost, or to think of a ghost in fajer day light, Andrew was nothing averse to the plan. Hunger is hard to bide at all times. Thirst is worse ; but when fear is absent, it is disregarded ; so the two friends had nothing ado but to sip a little brandy and water, and talk over the affair until the evening.

At rather an early hour they repaired to the library, in which they kindled a fire, and, stored with all the good things of this life, intending perhaps to remain there longer than one night, Andrew never seemed to believe that the ghost would really appear. Gilbert firmly believed that it would, and at first proposed that Andrew should speak to it, and that he himself would try to recollect distinctly what it said; but of this Andrew did not approve.

“No-billy-no-no-no-no—not-speak—not-speak—no-no-no-no. Speak-me—speak-me—speak-then—speak-then—speak-then—yes-yes-yes-yes-yes. Not-otherwise—not-otherwise—no-no-no-no.”

Gilbert assured him that no spirit had power to speak to a baptized Christian until once it was spoke to, and that it was only permitted to answer such questions as were put to it. For his part, he said, though the world jeered his belief, he was convinced that this was a real apparition, and that it had something to communicate of importance; and he knew that he had not courage, or rather nerve, to speak to it, unless he was the length of a certain stage of inebriety, and then he was afraid of nothing either on earth or in hell. But, on the other hand, as it had once happened before, when he got to that regardless stage, he could remember nothing that passed, so that it served no manner of purpose his speaking to the apparition, unless a sober man were present to take note of every word, sign, and look. He said that there was therefore a necessity that Andrew should refrain, in a great measure, from drinking, till the issue of their night's adventure should be decided, and that he should then have a right to make up his lee-way with double interest. Violent and rapid were Andrew's protestations against this measure, but Gilbert's resolve was not to be shaken, and he possessed a control over the other, which, though never admitted, was daily practised. Andrew's portion of brandy today was limited to a small quan-

tity. Gilbert's was to be without measure, otherwise than by the tappit-hen of discretion.

They were both taken rather at unawares. They had never calculated on any disturbance till about midnight, that being the usual time of the ghost's appearance in the library; so they had drawn in the corner of the table between them, and placed themselves, one on each side of the fire, resolved to enjoy themselves as long as they could, and, at all events, let the evil hour come hindmost. Gilbert had only swallowed one glass of strong brandy toddy, and Andrew one much weaker; and while they were yet in keen argument on this contested point, their clocution was cut short by Andrew, who made a sudden bolt across between the fire and table, nearly overturning the latter, and took his station in a cowering posture between his companion and the wall. This was the work of a moment. Gilbert, whose face was turned towards the fire, naturally looked about to see what had affrighted his associate, and there beheld the old laird walking composedly backward and forward before the old black book-case. He appeared to be dressed in his night-gown and slippers, and had, as it were, a white cloth tied round his head. It was so like him that it represented in every part, that it was hardly possible to believe it to be any thing else, save the old laird himself risen from the grave. Gilbert was struck motionless, and almost deprived of sense; and though he had made up his mind to be composed, yet his tongue clave to his mouth, his ears rung, and for a space he could neither be said to speak, hear, nor see. He felt as if falling into a faint, and longed exceedingly to be deprived of all feeling for a time; but it would not do, the strength of his constitution carried him over it; but all that he could do was to sit like a statue, fixed on his seat, and stare at this strange visitant. It appeared as if studious not to alarm them; it had not any of the threatening looks or attitudes that it had assumed towards some, nor

did it fix its looks at all on them, but walked with a slow gliding motion, from one side of the room to the other, and again retraced its steps, apparently in a state of patient sufferingance.

Andrew, whose tongue was merely a pendulum to his feelings, and wagged of its own accord when the machin^y was wound up, was the first who broke silence, beginning, it is true, with a prayer, but ending with an injunction that brought every thing to bear. “*O-Lord-God—Lord-God—Lord-God--deliver-deliver-deliver-’liver-’liver-’liver-’liver. Lord-Lord-Lord—save-save-save-sue-save-us-is-is-is-is. Gibby-Gibby-Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—speak-speak-speak-speak-spis-pis-pis-pis. Now-or-never—now-or-never—now-or-never—now-now-now-now. What-want—what-want—what-want—what-what-what-what-what-what?*”

The ghost at this paused, and turned its face toward them; and, though it did not lift its eyes from the floor, made as though it would have come close to them. Andrew instantly took up his sharp key; “*No-no-no-no-no-no-no—keep-keep-keep-keep-keep. Lord-God—Lord-God--Lord-God---Gibby-Gibby-Gibby-Gibby, &c.*”

Unconnected and vehement as these speeches of Andrew’s were, they had the effect of bringing Gilbert somewhat to himself, and he pronounced these words, rather down his throat than with his lips: “In the name of God, tell what you have to reveal, and what can be done for your repose.”

“I told you already, and wo be to you that you have not done it,” said the apparition. “I give you the charge once more; and know, that virtue and life depend on its instant fulfilment.”

“If I remember aright,” said Gilbert, “the thing that you desired me to do was impossible, or at least would have taken a life-time to have accomplished. In one word, what must I do?”

"Go through these books," said the spirit, pointing at the three huge volumes of Greek and Latin classics, "as you would wish to live and thrive, and never see my face again. It is a charge with which I intrust you; and if you have not patience to turn over every leaf, at least look into the pages marked on the boards. I know you to be honest; therefore, oh do this without delay, for my sake, as well as for your own. If you prove unfaithful, better had it been for you both that you never had been born. Farewell, and may the God of peace and mercy be with you!"

This moment he was standing before them in an earthly form, and speaking to them in an audible voice; the next he was gone, and none of them saw how, or by what place, he departed. They both averred that they believed they were, for the space of two or three seconds, blinded by some supernatural means, and saw nothing. For a good while afterwards, they sat in mute and awful astonishment, Andrew still keeping his hold between Gilbert and the wall. "This is wonderful," said Gilbert, after some minutes had elapsed; "What can be in these books?"

"See-that-billy-see-that-see-that-see-that-see-see-see-see." And so saying he arose from his den, gazing sternly at every corner of the room. "Blest-be-God-blest-be-God," said Andrew, and this he repeated at least a hundred times. Gilbert opened the press, and took down the three volumes, which they inspected narrowly. There was nothing marked on the boards that they could discern. They held them open, with the leaves downward, and shook them, but there was nothing fell out of them. That was, however, little to be wondered at, for they were in boards, and not a leaf of them cut up. They had, therefore, nothing for it but to begin each to a volume. in order to cut them all up and turn over every leaf. They had not gone far on with this task until Andrew, who was again fallen a poring about the boards, discovered some

figures on the inside of one of them, made with a pencil, and scarce distinguishable. These, he thought, might refer to some pages, as the apparition had hinted, and, turning to the first numbered on the board, in the double of the octave, which was uncut, he found a note for £1000. Having now discovered the key, in the course of three minutes they had treasure lying on the table, in bonds, bills at interest, &c. to the amount of nearly a plum. But what they reckoned of most value was the late laird's will, regularly signed and witnessed, together with two short codicils in his own holograph. And besides, they found a paper, in which was contained a list of all his funds, small and great. It was almost without end, and puzzled our two heroes not a little. They found that every pound was at the highest legal interest, save in one concealed drawer within the book-case, which was full of gold; and though the shelf was described, yet with all their ingenuity they could not find out the secret. Had the bookseller succeeded in carrying his point, what a bargain some would have gotten of that clumsy collection of classical authors! So heavy and impenetrable had the old laird judged these works to be, that he trusted his dear treasures in them, in preference to any lock or key under which he could secure them. And after this great secret was discovered, it was remembered that he never locked that book-case; it stood always wide open. He found, by experience, how perfectly safe his money was there; and I am told, that a certain wealthy and very worthy gentleman at the Scottish bar, practises the same mode of depositing his bills and cash to this day. I give this hint, as a sincere friend, to officious servants and lacqueys, in hopes they will have the foresight and prudence, at some leisure hour now and then, to cut up and inspect all their masters' neglected books. They may find something there worth their while.

Our two gallant heroes forgetting, and altogether neglecting,

the pleasures of the jug, in this notable discovery of theirs, waited not till day; but, locking up the *classics* in a secure place, they packed up their treasures, the will, and the list of the monies, and marched for Edinburgh. Not knowing where to find any of the other members of the family, they of course waited on Randal, whom they found confined to his chamber, emaciated and diseased. Him they informed, that after all the servants had been driven from the house, they had taken their lives in their hands, trusted in Heaven, and watched last night in the library, where they had made some discoveries of great importance, but which they were not at liberty to divulge, except in the presence of his brother Allan, and his cousin Swan Somerville; and therefore they begged that he would, with all haste, expedite such a meeting, accompanied by legal authorities.

Randal rung the bell, and ordered the servant to bring in some brandy and water. "My excellent and worthy friends," said he, "you have laid me under infinite obligations; if it had not been for your courage, my house might have been pillaged, and every thing in it gone to waste. Come, sit down, take a glass with me, and tell me all that you have done, seen, and learned." Fatigued with their journey, both of them blithely accepted of the invitation, sat down, and drank to the better health of the land; but at first were very shy in communicating the extraordinary intelligence with which their bosoms were charged, but which at the same time was working there like barmy beer in corked bottles, ready to burst. Consequently, by dint of elicitation, Randal, ere long, understood that they had discovered both his late uncle's will, and his concealed hoards. "Why, my most excellent and worthy friends," said Randal, "you know you are both poor men; and it is a pity you should be so; for two more noble, intrepid, fearless hearts, I believe, beats not in Christendom. It is on that I ground the proposal I am go-

ing to make. I know you fear none living ; indeed, you have none to fear ; and you have proven that you fear not the dead ; therefore be men ; put that will and that list into *my* hands, to whom they of right belong, and I'll give each of you a thousand pounds, and fifty pounds yearly to drink *my* health, as long as I live, and you together."

"Either-too-much-too-much-too-much-much-much-much. Else-too-little-billy-too-little-too-little-too-little. Ooo-ay-yes-yes-yes."

"Make your own terms, then, Mr Car, my worthy honourable old buck ; but let them be in conscience, you know. In some bounds of conscience between friends."

"Ooo-ay-yes-yes-yes-yes-yes—consh'-consh'-consh'-consh'-be-sure-be-sure-be-sure-what-else-what-else-what-else? What-what-what-what-what-*what*?"

The desperate accents laid upon these two monosyllables in italics, made Randal suspect that there was some small spark in Andrew's feelings that was scarcely congenial with his own, and he began to look a little sheepish, or rather scoundrelish, which is a much worse kind of look than a sheep's.

"I think, my friend Andrew," said Gilbert, "the proposal of my master is a noble and a liberal proposal, and ought to be duly considered before we go farther. It will perhaps never be in our power again to make so good a bargain. We are both growing old, and it is a dismal thing to have poverty and age staring us in the face at the same time."

"Spoke like yourself, my old trusty servant ! Spoke like a man whose spirit rises above being a drudge and a beggar all your days. The world has not been your friend nor the world's law, therefore obey the first law in nature, and stand for yourselves. I do not intend to bereave my brother and cousin of a farthing that is their natural right, only is it not better that they should be somewhat dependent on me? Is it not better in every point of view? For themselves it must be.

Put, then, all these papers and documents into my hands, and henceforth you shall be my friends and confidants, and managers of all my concerns."

"What say you to this, my friend Andrew?" said Gilbert.

"What-say-Gibby-what-say-what-say-what-say-what-what-what-what-*what*? Tell-ye-what-say-billy-tell-ye-what-say-tell-ye-tell-ye-tell-ye. Say-hell-billy-hell-hell-hell-hell-hell-hell-hell."

"Stop now and consider, my dear friend," said Randal, "You have been long known as a man of prudence and discernment. You must see that what I request is right and proper, and best for all parties. And moreover, what is it to you who possesses the funds, provided you get so good a share? There is enough for all parties, you know. Therefore just give me the hand of friendship each of you. Put the papers into my hands, and trust my honour."

"Do not you think, Andrew," said Gilbert, "that what my master requests is reasonable, and may be done with all honour and conscience? No one has seen these bills and papers but ourselves."

"*Damn'd-soul-Gibby-dam-soul-dam-soul-dam-soul-soul-soul-soul. Heaven-saw-Gibby-heaven-saw-heaven-saw-heaven-heaven-heaven-heaven-God-billy-God-God-God-God.*"

With that the tears poured over Andrew's furrowed cheeks; his inarticulate utterance entirely failed him; and he stood sobbing and looking ruefully in Gilbert's face, with his arm stretched upward at its full length, and his fore-finger pointed to heaven. Gilbert contemplated this striking position of his friend for a while with apparent delight, then, coming slowly toward him, as if afraid of defacing so fine a statue, he threw his arms about him, and pressed him to his bosom, "My friend and my brother till death," exclaimed he, "I am so glad to see that your honour and integrity are not to be tarnished! Before I would have yielded to the disgraceful re-

quest preferred to us, I would have submitted to be hewn in pieces, and I wanted to try you a little, to find if I might depend on you standing by me."

Andrew threw up both his arms, flung his head a cast backward, and pulled up one of his knees as high as his breast, and shouted out, "Hurra-hurra-hurra-hurra-ra-ra-ra-true-man-yet-true-man-yet—true-blue-true-blue-true-blue-trouble-trouble-trouble. Ha-ha-ha-hurra-hurra-hurra," &c.

"Gentlemen," said Randal, "Are you come here to mock me? I think your behaviour testifies as much. But I will show you that I am not to be mocked by such boors and beggarly rascallions as you; and what you refuse to do by fair means, you shall be compelled to do." With that he rung the bell, and ordering the servant to bring a guard of police, he locked the door upon himself and our two heroes.

"Rascallions, Gibby—rascallions-'scallions-'scallions-'scallions. I'll 'nihilate him Gibby—'nihilate-'nihilate-'nihilate."

Gilbert restrained his friend, assuring him that the object of his resentment was neither worthy of being touched nor looked at by a man of honour, like Andrew Car, who would be disgraced by laying a finger on him. This calmed the indignant gamekeeper, who, in all probability, would have subjected himself and friend to a severe punishment by giving the *atomy*, as he called him, a sound drubbing.

The men of office soon arrived. Randal charged the two men with having robbed his house in the country, and taken from thence some papers and documents of value, which they refused to give up. The lieutenant of the guard said it was a most serious charge, and took the two companions forthwith into custody, locking them up in the black-hole till the hour of cause.

They were examined by the sheriff-substitute, and Randal being unable to leave his chamber, his worthy friend, the attorney afore-mentioned, appeared in his stead, and in a la-

boured harangue, accused the prisoners of "having got clandestinely into the house of Welldean, under pretence of watching for a ghost that they say had disturbed the family, and from an apartment in that house, had stolen and secreted some papers of great value, of which they refused to give any account to the owner." And forthwith prayed judgment against them, that they might be searched, the papers restored to the rightful owner, and the delinquents committed for trial!

The judge said the charge was of a serious as well as singular nature, but that it bore inconsistency on the very face of it. For how was it supposable, that if the two men had robbed the house only last night of things of so much value, that they should post up to town to the very man whom they had robbed, to inform him what they had done, and lay a statement of the matter before him. He then requested the prisoners to speak for themselves, that he might thereby be enabled to form a judgment according to truth.

Gilbert arose, and in a clear and concise speech of considerable length, related the circumstances precisely as they happened, to the great astonishment of the court; and then proceeded to put into the sheriff's hands, the valuable documents and bonds that he held, saying, that he would merely keep a list of them for his own satisfaction, and was glad of having this public opportunity of depositing so weighty a charge; it having been because he and his friend refused to give it up privately to his master that they were sent there.

The judge said they had proven that it could not have been deposited in safer or better hands. But as the papers were of too high value to be carrying about one's person, he would lock it in a place of safety till the legatees and executors could be convened. At the same time he commended, in high terms, the intrepidity, truth, and candour of the two friends; and remarked, that the spirit manifested by the

young gentleman, in the demand he made upon them, and afterwards in seizing them as depredators, was disgraceful to the country and to all concerned with him, and ought to be held in the utmost reprobation. He then dismissed them, desiring them to go with all diligence in search of the young gentleman and lady that were co-heirs with the present possessor, and, as it appeared by the will, more favoured than he, of which he hoped they would likewise be more deserving.

The honest attorney, perceiving how matters were likely to turn about, made a virtue of forwarding that which he could no longer oppose, and conducted our two heroes straight to the Canongate jail, where Allan and Swan lay confined in sorrowful mood, little aware of what fortunes they were now possessed. They had only that morning made a discovery of each other, and that at a most critical period, just as Swan was going finally off with Mr M'—— after many demurs. When she beheld her lover so emaciated by sickness, grief, and misfortune, she melted into tears, and stretched out her hand to him, which he clasped in both his, and pressed to his lips. They found themselves companions in misfortune, as they had been in infancy and youth, and their reconciliation was made up in the heart, and took place naturally, without any effort of the one to refuse, or the other to beg it; and for all the forlorn and neglected state in which they found each other, that was perhaps the sweetest morning ever they had spent in their lives.

On Allan being introduced, Mr M'—— and the keeper withdrew, but the two former bowed to each other slightly, as men slightly acquainted do when they meet. As soon as the two lovers got a little breath from more important matters, Miss Sommerville asked Allan, what he knew of that young gentleman that went out with the captain? "I only saw him once in my brother's lodgings," said he; "he is a

constant associate of his ; a young man of loose principles, or rather, of no principles at all. He is said to have led my brother into many follies."

"An associate of your brother's?" said she, with something more than ordinary earnestness. "Yes," said he, "they live together."

Swan became fixed like a statue. She saw, as through a glass darkly, the machinations that had been laid for destroying her peace. She thought of the disgraceful proposal that had been broadly made to her by her cousin Randal—of Mrs M—— in Saint James' Street, the very woman who had tried, in concert with Mr Mayder, to get her into his power ; and she strongly believed, that this imprisonment and proffered relief had all proceeded from the same source. "What a vile heartless wretch that man of fashion, my cousin Randal, is !" thought she to herself ; "no matter, he is Allan's brother, and Allan shall never know his true character, if I can prevent it." They were instantly released, on granting the attorney their joint bill for the two sums, and were man and wife in three months thereafter. Randal never left the chamber to which he was then confined, till carried out of it to his grave. He fell, unlamented, the victim of youthful folly and unrestrained libertinism. Gilbert was again constituted house-steward and butler at Welldean Hall, which two *lucrative* posts he maintained as long as he lived. Andrew Car was made gamekeeper, and the two friends had a jug of brandy toddy together, unrestrained, for many long years. The concealed drawer of gold was at last found out ; the ghost of the old laird was never seen any more ; and, the year before last, when I was at Welldean Hall, Allan and his lady were both living in great happiness, though far advanced in age.

COUNTRY DREAMS AND APPARITIONS.

No. VI.

TIBBY JOHNSTON'S WRAITH.

"HOLLOA, Wat, stop till I come up w'ye. Dinna just gallop at sic a rate man, else you'll founder your horse, an' brik your ain neck into the bargain. Whatten a gate o' riding is that? Stop still, I tell you; I have something to say to you."

"What do you want with me? Tell me directly, for I hae nae a moment to wait. Do you not see that I am in a hurry?"

"To be sure I see that, but then you are always in a hurry. Stay till I come up w'ye, an' then I'll tell you what I want. I have something very particular to say to you. What nonsense is it to ride at that rate? I'll tell you what I want w'ye: can you tell me precisely what o'clock it is?"

"D—n the fellow! What do you mean to stop me for sic a trifle as that, an' me riding atween death an' life for the doctor?"

"For the doctor? Hech! wow! Wat, man, but I didna ken that. What is it, that's gane wrang w'ye?"

"What's gane wrang! O, bless your heart, man, a's gane wrang together. There was never sic a job kend i' this world. Our mistress has seen a wraith; she saw Tibby Johnston's wraith last night, an' she's dead wi' the fright this morning."

"Dead wi' the fright! Wow, Wat, is she really dead?"

"Dead! bless you, sir, she's clean dead. There never was sic a business in this country. My heart's like to break, an' I'm amaisht fleyed out o' my wits into a' ither mischief. O,

bless your heart, man, there never was the like o' this!— Never, never! oh! dead! Bless ye, she's cauld dead, sir!"

"Why then, Wat, it was real true what ye said, that ye war riding atween death an' life; for, gin the wife be dead and the doctor living, there's nae doubt but ye're riding atween them. But, dear Wat, mony a daft thing ye hae done w' your life, but ye never did aught half sae ridiculous as this, to gallop at sic a rate bringing the doctor to a dead wife."

"O, bless your heart, man, what can folk do? Folk are glad to keep a grip o' life as lang as they can, an' even after it flees out at the window, they'll whiles hing by the tail. But it's the fashion now. Every body sends for the doctor to their wives after they're dead."

"Ay, an' gin a' tales be true, the doctors whiles come to them after they're dead an' buried baith, without being sent for. But truly, Wat, there is something sae far ayont a' ordinary things in this business, that ye maun 'light an' tell me a' about it. Your mistress saw Tibby Johnston's wraith, you say, an' is dead wi' the fright. But what is come o' Tibby Johnston? Is there ought the matter wi' her?"

"O, God bless your heart, sir, Tibby's dead too. There never was sic a job seen! I hardly ken what I'm doing. Of a' the nights that ever was about a town! O, bless you, sir, you never saw the like o't! I maun gae ride, ye see. If the beast should drap dead aneth me there's nae help for it."

"Tak just a wee time, Wat, an' dinnae be in sic a fike. What do ye expect that the doctor can do for the dead woman?"

"O, bless your heart, wha kens? It's a' that folk can do. Auld Kilside says he'll maybe open a vain and gar her refusticate. Hap, woy beast. For gude sake, get on; fareweel."

"Open a vain an' gar her refusticat! ha, ha, ha! Hap, woy, beast. There goes Wat like a flying eagle! Weel, I canna help laughin' at the gouk, although I'm sorry for the

cause o' his confusion an' hurry. If thae twa women really are baith dead, thae haena left ither twa like them i' the parish, an' few i' the hale country. I'll e'en gae up the water a mile or twa, an' try if I can get the particulars."

David went away up the water as he had resolved, and every one that he met with, he stopped to ask what time of the day it was ; to make some observations on the weather ; and, finally, to inquire if there were any news up the country ; knowing, if any of them had heard of the events at Carlshaw, they would inform him ; but he got no satisfactory account until he reached the place. It was at the foot of Milseyburn-path that he stopped Wat Scott riding for the doctor, and from that to Carlshaw is at least six miles ; so far had he travelled to learn the particulars of that distressing event. David Proudfoot was a very old man, herding cows, when I was a tiny boy at the same occupation. He would often sit with the snuff-mill in his hand, and tell me old tales for hours together ; and this was one among the rest. He cared for no tales, unless he had some share in the transactions himself. The story might be told in few words, but it would spoil my early recollections, and I could not endure to see it otherwise than as David told it, with all its interpolations.

" When I wan to Carlshaw, I gaed first into the stable and then into the byre, but there was naebody to be seen. The yaulds were standing pickering at the manger, and the kye were rowting ower the crib. A' isna right here, indeed, quo I to myself, as I sneckit the door ahint me ; for when Mrs Graham was in her ordinary way, there was nae servant about the house durst neglect their charge that gate. The plough was standin' idle in the houn, an' the harrows lying birstling on the sawn croft. It's e'en a picture o' desolation, quo I to mysel'. Every ane's missed amang their ain ; but gae without the bounds o' the farm, just beyond that dike, an' there's no ane thinkin' o' the loss. I was right. When you

an' I slip away to our lang hame, my man, others will just pop into our places, an' laugh, and fike, an' mind their ain affairs, an' never ane will think o' us ava.

"Weel, I didna like to intrude on a family in distress, for I was but a young man then; sae I thinks that I'll chap away up to Matthew Hyslop's bit house, and see if it be true that the gouk said; for if he has lost his wife, Tibby Johnston, says I to mysel', he'll never put the like o' her in her shoön. When I gaed up near the cot house, they had nae apartments there to hide themselves in frae the ee o' the warld; an' there I saw Matthew sitting on the green brae side, an' a' his five bairns about him; an' he had the muckle Bible open in his hand, but when he saw me he closed it, and laid it down.

"How's a' wi' ye the day, Matthew?" quo' I.

"I canna complain, an' I winna complain, Davie," said he. "I am just as it has been the will o' the Lord to make me. Hale in health, but broken in heart, Davie. We hae been visited wi' a heavy dispensation here last night."

"Wow, Matthew, but I'm wae to hear that," quo' I.

"Pray, what has happened i' your family?"

"It has pleased the Almighty to take thae poor bairns' mother frae their head last night, David; and here am I left as helpless and disconsolate a poor man as the sun o' heaven has this day risen on."

"It is a heavy trial, Matthew," quo' I. "But ye maunna repine. Ye maun bear it like a man, and a Christian. Your wife has only paid a debt that she has been awn for these forty years, an' ye maun trust in Heaven, an' be resigned."

"So I am, so I am, David." You have said the truth, and I am resigned. But our fallin' nature is weak, and the human heart maun be allowed some yearnings ower what it held dearest in life. I hope my kind Maker and Redeemer will forgive my tears, for my griefs no out o' my repining at

the execution o' his just decrees ; but, oh ! David, sic a woman as I hae lost."

" She was a good woman, Matthew," says I. " If Tibby Johnston wasna a good woman and a Christian, mony ane may be feared."

" There's nane kens what she was but mysel', David. We hae lived thegither for these fifteen years, and I never heard the word o' discontent frae her tongue, nor saw a frown on her brow. She had the true feelings of a wife and a mother ; for she only lived in, and for her family. Their happiness was hers ; an' a' their pains, an' a' their wants, she felt as her own. But, ower and aboon that, she had a warm heart to a' mankind, and a deep reverence for every sacred thing. Had my dear woman died in my arms, my heart wadna hae been sac sair ; but Oh, David ! she died out on the hill, wi' no ae friend near, to take her last farewell, to support her head, or to close her ee."

" I held my tongue, and could make nae answer, for he was sobbing sae hard, that his heart was like to burst. At length he came to himsel', and composed his voice as well as he could.

" I maun tell ye ower ilka thing as it happened, David," said he ; " for I hae nae pleasure but in speaking about her whose head's lying low in that house the day. When she waken'd yesterday morning, she says to me, ' Bless me, Matthew,'—Ay, she had ay that bit sweet, harmless by-word.—Bless me, bairn, or, bless me, Matthew. Mony a time she said it ; though I whiles reproved her, and said it was sae like a Papish signing and blessing hersel', that I didna like to hear it. Then she wad gie a bit short laugh—ye mind her good-natured, bashfu' laugh, David ?—and say, that she would try to remember no to say't again ; but out it came the very next word, and there was nae mair about it, for laith wad I hae been to hae higgled wi' her, an' vex'd her

about any thing ! My canny woman ! Sae, as I was saying, she says to me, when she waken'd, ' Bless me, Matthew, sic a dream as I hae had last night ! I dreamed I was gaun away the day to be married to a new bridegroom, an' leave you an' the bairns to shift for yoursel's. How wad ye like that, good-man ? ' I said something in a joking way, whilk it is needless to repeat, that there was nane wad be sic a fool as to take her aff my hand, but if they did, that I wad soon get a better. ' Ay ! ' quo' she, ' it is easy for you to say sae, but weel I ken it's far frae your heart. But, Matthew,' continued she, in a graver tone, ' does it not bode ill to dream o' marriage ? I think I hae heard my auld aunt say, that to dream o' marriage was death.' ' Daft body,' quo' I, ' ye trouble aye your head wi' vagaries. Whoever follows freets, freets will follow them.' ' I saw mony a braw man riding on their horses, but I mysel' gaed i' the fore-end, and was the brawest mountit o' them a', ' said she. I thought nae mair about it, and she said nae mair about it ; but after we had gotten the breakfast, I sees her unco dinkly dressed, for she was soon made neat and clean. ' What are ye after the day, Tibby ? ' quo' I. ' I'm gaun to the market,' said she. ' I hae three spinles o' sale yarn for auld Tammie, an' I'm gaun to buy barley, an' saut, an' some ither little things for the house wi' the price o't.' ' Ye're a good creature, an' a thrifty anc,' quo' I : ' there never was a better about a poor man's house.' Then she leugh, an' fikit about putting a' things to rights for the bairns and me through the day ; for she likit a bit praise, and whenever I rused her, she was as happy and as light-hearted as when she was nineteen years auld. Then, after settling wi' the bairns what she was to bring ilk an' o' them, she set out wi' her yarn on her back, saying, that she wad be hame about the gloaming ; but I wasna to be ony feared for her though she was gayen late, for she had been rather lang o' winning away, and had muckle ado.

“ When the gloaming came, I began to weary, but I couldna get the bairns left, and was obliged to look and listen, and mony lang look and lang listen I took in vain. I put the bairns ane by ane to their beds, and sat up till midnight. But then I could rest nae langer, sae I ran to a neighbour to come and bide i’ the house, and aff I set for the market town, expecting at every turn to meet my woman wi’ her bit backfu’. I gaed a’ the gate to the town without meeting wi’ her, and cried the fock out o’ their beds that I kend she dealt wi’, but she hadna been seen there after three o’clock. At length, after it was day-light, I got some spearings o’ her at the holm-head. The weaver’s wife there, had seen her and spoken wi’ her, and she told her that she was gaun to try the hill road, that she might be hame wi’ some hue o’ day. I took the hill road as fast as my feet could carry me, and a wild road it is, unfit for a woman wi’ a burden to travel. There was but ae sheiling in the hale gate, if she keepit the right track, and I had strong hopes that she had been nightit and staid there until day. When I came to the sheil, and asked for her, the shepherd’s wife started to her feet, ‘ What ! ’ said she, holding up both her hands, ‘ did your wife not come home last night ? ’ ‘ No. ’ said I. ‘ Then you will never see her again in life ; ’ said she, with great emotion, ‘ for she left this house after sun-set. She asked a drink of milk, and complained of something about her heart that made her very ill ; but nothing would prevail on her to stay. ’ My heart grew as cold as a stone ; and, without uttering another word, I took the hill on my way homeward. A wee bit after I came ower the height, and no very far aff the road—no aboon a hunder steps aneath the sand o’ the moss⁷ grain—Oh, David, I canna tell ye nae mair ! The sight that I saw there will hing about my heart to the day o’ my death, an’ the sooner that comes the better. She had died at her devotion, whilk was a great comfort to me, for she was in a kneeling posture, and her face

on the ground. Her burden was lying beside her. My dear kind woman! there wasna the least bit necessary thing forgotten! There was a play for ilk ane o' the bairns; a whup to Harry; a knife to Jock; and a picture-beuk to little Andrew. She had us a' in her breast; and there's little doubt that her last petition was put up to Heaven for us. I can tell ye nae mair, David, but ye maun come up again Sabbath first, and render the last duty to the best o' women,"

"I promised that I would, and said some words o' comfort to him, that he was a great deal the better o'; but I hadna the heart to tell him what had befallen at Carlshaw; for I thought he coudna thole that. But down I comes mysel', to see if I can make ony farther discoveries about matters. I was mair fortunate this time; an' it's wonderfu' what effect mortality has in making fock devout, for there I finds auld Yiddie, the barnman, who never cared a fig about religion, sitting brogging and spelling at a kittle chapter in Nehemiah, thinkin', I daresay, that he was performing a very devout act. An' Yiddie really had the assurance, when I came to him, to pretend to be in a very religious frame o' mind. But gin ye had but heard Yiddie's sawpient sayings about *the end o' man*, as he ca'd it, really, callant, they wad hae edified ye very muckle. 'Ye're thrang at your beuk, Yiddie,' quo' I. 'O, ay, what can we do? *The end o' man's* comin on us a'! We maun be preparing lad; for death spare's naebody, an' the mair's the pity. He maws them down as the gerse on the field; an' as a thing fa's in time, it maun lie through a' eternity, ye ken. It is a hard compensation this. But it shaws the workings of man, and the end of a things is at hand. We maun e'en be preparing lad, and do the best we can for a good up-pitting.'"

"I said something to Yiddie that he was a hantle the better o'. 'Yiddie,' says I, 'Do you expect to mix wi' the auld Jews i' the neist warld?' 'What has put that i' your

head?' quo' he. 'Because I dinna see how reading that lang catalogue o' names,' quo' I, 'can prepare ye for death, or for another warld, unless ye expect to meet wi' aw the auld Jews that came back frae Babylon, and wish to be able to name ilka chap by his ain name. I'll tell ye what wad be as wiselike, Yiddie. If ye wad repent o' a' your sins, and beg forgiveness and mercy at the Throne o' Grace, it wad be as likely to gain you acceptance wi' Heaven, as putting on a grave face, and spelling ower a string o' auld warld names. But gie us a' the particulars o' this *hard compensation*, Yiddie. Has the doctor no been able to restore your mistress to life?"

"Na, na lad, he wad be a wice doctor could do that; an' muckle sae he wad get; an' O sic a benefit he wad be to man!" (I heard Yiddie didna like to die at a'.) "But as to our mistress that's gane, honest woman! there was nae doctor to be had, an' it was a' ane for that, for she was past redemption. I said there was nae mair hope after she fell into the second fit; an' neither there was; but the goodman wad be hoping against nature an' reason. After a', I dinna wonder muckle at it; for it was an awfu' thing to see a wraith."

"Did she indeed see something that coudna be accounted for, Yiddie?" said I, "and was that the immediate cause of her death?"

"There's nae doubt but it was the cause o' her death, said he, "although the minister is sae daft as to say that she had been affectit wi' the trouble afore, an' that had made her believe that she saw the shape o' her neighbour gaun at her side. But ony body kens that's nonsense. Thae ministers, they will aye pretend to be wicer nor ither fouk, an' the feint a sperk o' sense they ken ava, but just rhaim rhaim rhaiming aye the same thing ower again, like gouk. June. But as to accounting for the thing, that's what I canna say

naething about. She saw Tibby Johnston's wraith; but whether a wraith can be rightlly accountit for or no, is mair nor I can persoom."

"I can account for it very weel, Yiddie," says I, "and I'll do it to set your mind at rest about that, for I hae heard it explained by my ain mother, and several cunning old people. Wraiths are of twa kinds, you see. They appear always immediately before death, or immediately after it. Now, when a wraith is seen before death, that is a spirit sent to conduct the dying person to its new dwelling, in the same way as the Earl o' Hopetoun there, for instance, wad send a servant to conduct a stranger to his house at Rae-hill that had never been there before. These are sometimes good, and sometimes bad spirits, just according to the tenor of the person's life that lies on the bed o' death. And sometimes the deil mistakes himsel', and a spirit o' baith kinds comes: as for instance, when Jean Swinton departit, there was a white dowie sat on the ae end o' the house, an' a corby on the ither; but when the death psalm was sung, the corby flew away. Now, when the wraith appears after death, that's the soul o' the deceased, that gets liberty to appear to the aye o' a' its acquaintances that is the soonest to follow it; and it does that just afore it leaves this world for the last time; and that's the true doctrine o' wraiths," says I, "and we should a' profit by it."

"Hech wow man, but that's wonderfu'!" says he, "How do ye come to ken sicken things sae young? Weel, of a' things i' the world I wad like warst to see a wraith. But your doctrine hauds very fair in this case; for you see our mistress gae'd away up to Matthew's house yestreen to see Tibby after she cam hame frae the mercat, for she was to bring her some word that deeply concerned her. Weel, she staid there till the gloaming, and as Tibby wasna like to

come hame, she came away, saying, ‘ She wad see her the morn.’

“ Aye, sae she will, Yiddie, sae she will !” says I. “ But little did she ken, when she said sae, that she was to see her in a country sae far away.” “ It is a queer warld this,” said Yiddie. “ Howsomever I’ll gang on wi’ my story, as I dinna want to dyve into morality eenow. Weel, as I was saying, she comes her ways ; but in her road hameward, ere ever she wist, saw Tibby gaun twa or three steps afore her, and at the aff side o’ the road, as if she kad gaen by without tenting her. She had on her Sunday claes, and appeared to hae a heavy burden on her back, and she was gaun rather like ane dementit. The mistress then cried after her, ‘ Tibby, is that you ? I think you’re come by your ain house the night.’ It made nae answer, but positit on ; and turned a wee aff the road, and fell down. Our mistress made a’ the haste down to the place that she could, still thinking it was Tibby Johnston hersel’, and she was gaun to lift her, and see what was the matter ; but when she came to the spot there was nothing there, and no living creature to be seen. She was nae frightit that time at a’ ; but, thinking she hadna seen distinctly, she lookit a’ round about her, and cried out several times, “ ‘ Tibby, what’s comé o’ you ? where away are you gane ?” or something to that purpose. But, neither seeing nor hearing ought, she came back to the road and held on her way. In less than three minutes after that she saw Tibby gaun before her again, but still mair unsettled and distressed like than she was afore. The mistress didna speak that time, for she thought something was the matter wi’ her, but she walked as fast as she could to come up wi’ her, and thought aye she was winning some ground. At length she saw her drap down again on her face, and she thought she fell like ane that was never to rise again. On this her mis-

tfess gae a loud scream, and ran up to the spot, but there was nobody there.

“ She saw nae mair, but came hame by hersel’, and wonderfu’ it was how she was able to come hame. As soon as she came in and saw the light she fainted, and gaed out o’ ae fainting fit into another the hale night, and was in great distress and horror o’ mind. A’ the servants o’ the house sat up wi’ her, and about day she fell into a quiet sleep. When she wakened she was a good deal composed, and we had hopes that she would soon be quite better, and the goodman went to a bed to get some rest. By ill luck, hivering Jean Jinkens came in about nine o’clock to see the mistress, and ere ever ane could prevent her, tauld that Tibby Johnston had died out on the hill the last night; and that her husband had found her this morning lying cauld and lifeless, wi’ her burden on her back, and her face on the ground.

“ This intelligence threw Mrs Graham into a stupor, or rather she appeared striving to comprehend something that was beyond the grasp of her mind. She uttered some half-articulate prayers, and then fell into a complete franazy, which increased every minute to a terrible degree, till her strength was clean gane, and she sank back lifeless on the bed. After muckle exertion by her attendants, she revived, but she wasna like hersel; her voice was altered, and her features couldnae ha’e been kend. Her delirium increased, and forced her again to a little bodily exertion, but it soon came to an end, and she fell into that sleep from which a’ the attendants and a’ the doctors in the warld could not have awaked her again. She’s now lying a streekit corpse in her ain bed, and the goodman, I fear, will gang out o’ his right mind.”

Yiddie didna just tell it sae weel, or sae properly as that, but that was the subject matter. I came my way hame right dloof an’ heavy-hearted, for I had gotten a lesson read to me that I never could forget.

“ On the Saturday afore the twa burials, I was down at the road-side afore the sheep as usual, and there I sees Wat Scott coming gallopping faster than ever. When he saw me he laid on his horse, thinking to get by ere I wan on to the road, but I was afore him ; and, fearing I couldna stop him otherwise, I brought my coat-tails o’er my head, and cowered afore him on the middle o’ the road. Nae horse nor dog in the world will face ane in that guise, and in a moment Wat was gallopping faster up the water than before he was doing down. But, goodness, as he was flyting and banning at me !

“ Wat, just ’light aff your beast feasible like,” says I, “ and lead it down the path, else never a foot ye shall win farther the day.” He was obliged to comply, and I questioned him what was the matter, and if he was riding for the doctor again ?

“ Doctor, man ! od bless your heart, it’s ten times waur than the doctor this. There never was sic a job, sir, sin’ this world stood up. Never. I *do not* see, for my part, what’s to come o’ folk. I think people be infatuate ! Bless you, sir, you never knew sic a business in your life. A’ things are gawn to utter confusion now.”

“ What is it, Wat, man ? What is it ? ”

“ What is it ! Bless my soul, man, did you no hear ? you never heard, sir, sic a business *all your* life. What think ye, the confounded idiot of a wright has done, but made our mistress’ coffin so short that she canna get a foot into it. There never was sic a job seen in this country. Lord, sir, she’ll never look intil’t ! ”

“ It is a very awkward and disagreeable job indeed, Wat,” says I, “ and highly reprehensible ; but I should think, by using a little art, it might still answer.”

“ The thing is impossible, sir ! perfectly impossible ! The man must be a blockhead ! Bless your heart, sir, she’ll never ~~get into it~~ ^{fit into it} Disagreeable ! Ay, there never was ought in

the least like it. There, think of it—this is Saturday—the morn's the burial day. I wadna wonder but I hae a coffin to tak hame afore me the night after dark. It's enough to put ony man alive out o' his judgment. I think the folk be a' gane mad and stupid thegither."

Wat gallopped away from me, actually crying with perplexity, and exclaiming, that *there never was sic a job kend i' the world*. The burials were baith in the kirk-yard on the Sabbath-day at the same time;—and that is the hale story o' Tibby Johnston's wraith, my little man, sae aften spoken about in this country. When ye come to my time o' life, ye may be telling it to somebody, and, if they should misbelieve it, you may say that you heard it from auld Davie Proudfoot's ain mouth, and he was never kend for a liar.

THE END.

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